JAMMA SHOW SCOOP REPORT — ALL SEGA'S NEW COIN-OPS!

MEAN MACHINES SEGA

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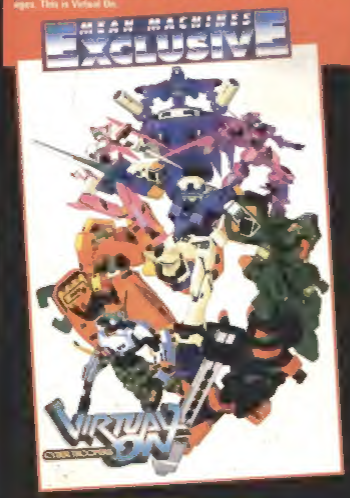
This is AM3's awesome conversion of the most popular coin-op in Japan this year. This is the fastest, most original shoot 'em up we've seen in ages. This is Virtual On.



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EVERYTHiNG

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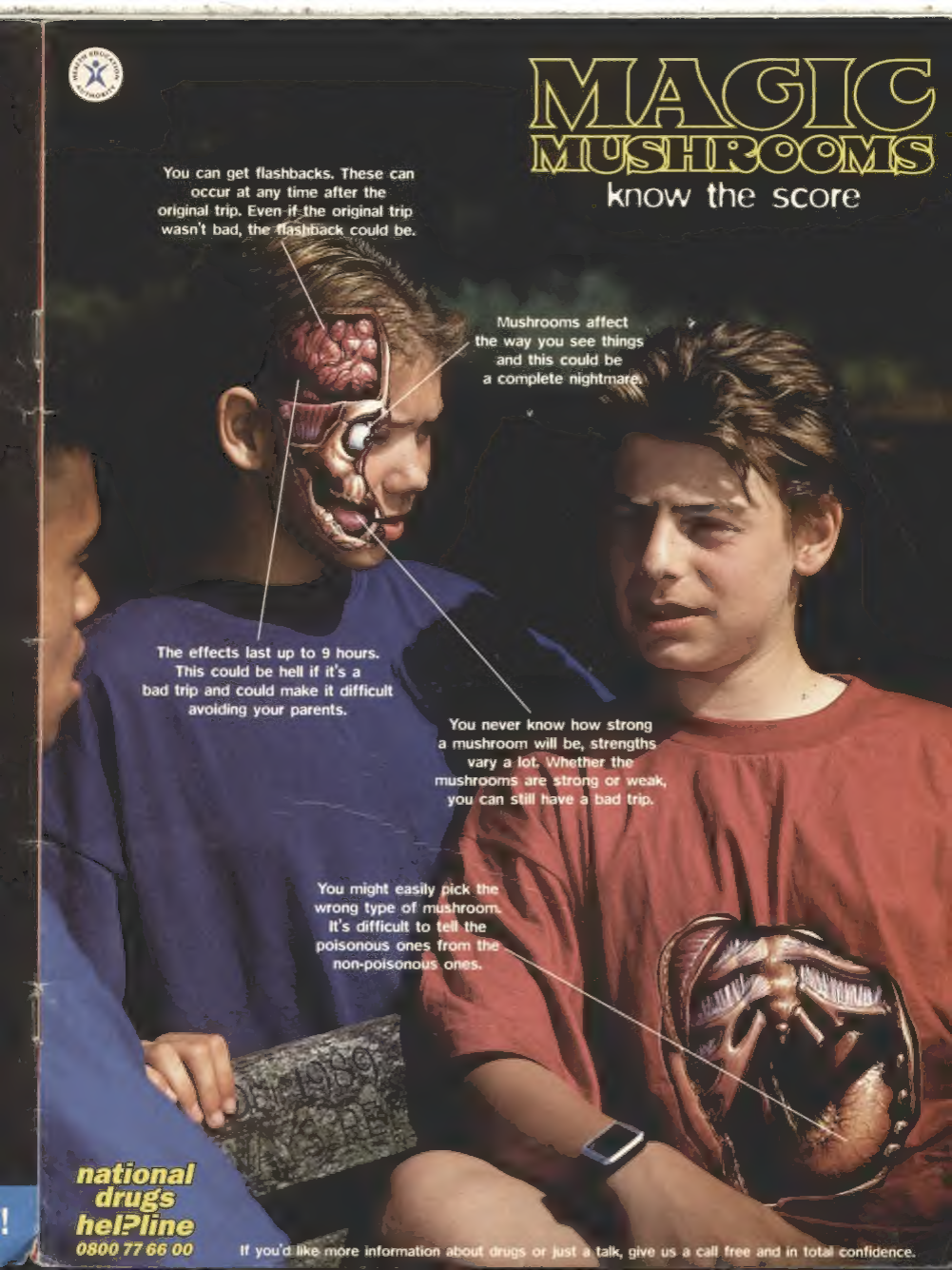
MAGIC MUSHROOMS

know the score


You can get flashbacks. These can occur at any time after the original trip. Even if the original trip wasn't bad, the flashback could be.
Mushrooms affect the way you see things and this could be a complete nightmare.
The effects last up to 9 hours. This could be hell if it's a bad trip and could make it difficult avoiding your parents.
You never know how strong a mushroom will be, strengths vary a lot. Whether the mushrooms are strong or weak, you can still have a bad trip.
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EDITORIAL

Has it been a month? It certainly doesn't seem so, as this has been one of the busiest for a long time. The team has been working hard on the long-awaited 'new look' for MEAN MACHINES, and you will see their handiwork in next month's issue, along with some amazing enticements (see Next Month for that).But the mag you are holding is not to be sniffed at, as we've got a staggering amount of news, spanning the major European game show in London, to the world's premier arcade game showcase in Japan. Snatching the first full preview of Virtual On is something we're particularly proud of — including the first two-player mode pictures. Lastly, to PJ, one of MEAN MACHINES most faithful adherents (and no mean artist), good luck and keep the faith.

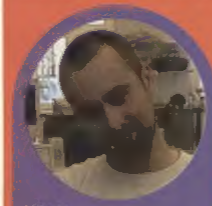
GUS

WHO'S THE MAN AT NiGHTS?

Probably the greatest score challenge game ever, NiGHTS offers an irresistable challenge which we'd like you Saturn warriors to pick up. We want scores! Send in your overall scores for each dream and best links for each course (they'll be in Dream Data). However, there's a catch. Your must be achieved with the correct boss for that dream, not your favourite! So that's Gillwing for Spring Valley, Puffy for Splash Garden, Gulpo for Mystic Forest, Clawz for Frozen Bell, Jackle for Soft Museum and Reala for Stick Canyon . We'll start printing a league next month, and the grand winner will be in line for something really, really special. Trust us.

GAME OVER, YEAH!

We're saying goodbye to some familiar faces this month, as Claire, Marcus and Dan all bid MEAN MACHINES a fond farewell. Good riddance, we say.



GUS

Claire's departure means that the longest-serving member of the team is now something of an elder statesman figure. And the message from the bunker is that we are winning the war. "The desertion of my generals bothers me little," sneers Angus. "The punishment for deserters is execution. I shall be handling it personally." Gus has big plans for the future of the redesigned MEAN MACHINES, and isn't at all fazed by the current changes in staff. Reports of his recent erratic behaviour have been exaggerated. "That vacuum cleaner was asking for it," he growls. "And that's not a twitch – I've just had something in my eye recently." So, as the age of a brand new MEAN MACHINES dawns, what are Gus's hopes and intentions for the UK's flagship Sega title? "Lemon meringue pantyhose."

CLAIRE

An era has drawn to a close – after more than three years designing MEAN MACHINES SEGA, Claire Coulthard is waving goodbye. "I'm going to miss the magazine a lot," she sniffs, "but I've got a smart new job on top girls' mag It's Bliss so I'll be able to blag loads of clothes and lipstick and stuff. That should keep my pecker up if I ever get depressed." When Claire started on the UK's top Sega mag, she was part of a team that included such legendary names as Oz Brown, Rad Automatic and Jaz Rignall. "I've got a lot of happy memories, and I met my boyfriend (Sega Saturn Magazine's Dave Kelsall) when I was working here. It's been fun!" Before she breaks a thousand hearts, Claire has a message... "I'd like to say a big goodbye to everyone and blow you all a big kiss. Ta da!"

MARCUS

"When Claire told me she was resigning I decided I just couldn't face coming into the office if she wasn't here," says Marcus. "So I resigned as well. This is my last issue of MEAN MACHINES – I'm going to work for Titan Books as the new editor of Star Wars Magazine. It's going to be smart." Marcus joined the mag as deputy editor last summer. "It's time for a change – MEAN MACHINES is going to be revamped from the next issue and some new people should help give the whole thing a kick up the bum. Before I go, both Claire and I would like to say a big thank you to Mark at Sega. Ta!" There is just one more thing... "Well, I suppose I ought to come clean," he confesses. "It's me that writes the silly little 'personality boxes' on the editorial pages." The mystery's solved. So who's writing this then?

Megadrive is still alive and well this month, as Sonic 3D testifies. We've reached the sixth generation of Megadrive games (Toy Story, Sonic 3D) and Sega have performed miracles with 16bit hardware that we never even dreamed were possible. But it wasn't always like this. Cast your mind back to the release of the Megadrive in 1990 and the original line up of software: Ghouls'n'Ghosts – amazing!, Golden Axe – arcade perfect, Altered Beast – er, Cack! That's right, Sega's first ever coin-op conversion was a shambling travesty of a 2D beat 'em up that was an insult to both Sega and the coin-op original. The 'morph into an animal' gameplay was incredibly poor, and malformed sprites moved with all the grace of Stephen Hawking trying to tapdance. A worthy entry into the corner that some call Cak.

UNUSUAL SUSPECTS

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Special thanks to: Sega for the party and Mark Ian goodies. Alison for Wild 9's staff so prompt and so sexy.

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CRIMESTOPPERS: 0171-972 6700
FAX: 0171-972 6701
PRINTING BY: Cooper Clegg
COLOUR: Sarah-Jane Leavey and Sarah Best
DISTRIBUTION: BBC FrontLine
PRINTED IN THE UK
© EMAP Images 1996

SUBSCRIPTION & BACK ISSUE ENQUIRIES
TOWER PUBLISHING
TOWER HOUSE
SOVEREIGN PARK
LATHKILL ST
MARKET HARBORO
LEICESTER
LE16 9EF
TEL: 01858-468888

SUBSCRIPTION RATES (12 ISSUES INC P&P)
United Kingdom and BFPO: £30.00
Overseas Surface Mail: £36.00
Airmail Europe and Eire: £42.00
Airmail Zones 1 & 2: £66.00
Airmail Zone 2: £69.00

Back issues UK: £3.50 each
Back issues, rest of world: £4.99 each

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And another thing... Employees, their families and suppliers of EMAP Images are not eligible for entry in competitions. There is no cash alternative to the prizes offered. The Editor's decision is final. No dice, fatboy.

MEAN MACHINES uses Dolby Surround Sound equipment to test all featured software.

And now we go to bed.

DOLBY SURROUND

NICK

"I'm definitely not leaving," asserts Nick. That's a relief. And talking of relief, Nick's perks have been of an above average quality recently. "Yeah," he wriggles in his seat. "I met Joanne Guest at the ECTS show. She was shaking her thang in the Acclaim cabaret, looking really fit. I spotted this vision of loveliness having a quick fag behind the stand so I asked her to sign my copy of MEAN MACHINES." What did she write? "Next to the picture of me she wrote 'Phwoaarr, sexy dude. Love, Joanne Guest.' After that she asked me if she could come back to my place. I had to say no, however." Why – because you were partying all night or because you already had a hot chick waiting? "Er, well, my mum says I'm not allowed to have girls in my room."

DAN

The MEAN MACHINES migration continues with Mr Jevons, who's barely been here long enough to leave. "I just couldn't stand it any longer," he grumbles. "No, actually I've had an offer I can't refuse – I'm going to work on GameFan magazine in the US of A." Dan, who's swapping Farringdon for Beverly Hills, was initially attracted by the superb transfer package, exciting opportunities and sheer prestige of the job. "But then I thought sod that – I'm going for the beach and the babes!" Dan's perfecting a Lord Snooty-type persona to amuse his American colleagues (in fact he's been working on it for about 22 years) and is banking on breaking into the movies before Christmas. He's already packed a crowbar and a pair of wirecutters. Toodle-pip Dan – it's been a grin.

INSECTORS GIVEAWAY!

Insektors is the psychedelic computer-animated show that charts the chucklesome adventures of a bunch of insects, butterflies and beetles. Each story is about another battle in the war between the Venigreens who live in the lucious Flower City and the malicious Kruds who live on the dark side of the Black Planet. Apart from top characters like Draffsack, Godfrey and Queen Catheter, what really makes this show is the gobsmacking computer animation. Insektors is back on the telly in October, but Channel 4 Video have given us Volumes One and Two of their new Insektors tapes to give away to the winners of our latest compo. Each tape contains a bunch of episodes and is on sale now at £9.99, but you could be among the five winners who'll pick up Volumes 1 & 2 for free if you answer this question correctly. Which recent Disney movie was entirely computer animated?

Put your answer on the back of a sealed-down envelope or postcard and send it to CREEPY CRAWLIES at the editorial address.

NEWS

THE SHOW GOES ON

ECTS (European Computer Trade Show) is the games industry's traditional bunfight, held twice a year in April and September. Show reports in MEAN MACHINES are an almost as ingrained ritual, with the best and worst on show up for inspection. This ECTS at London's Olympia was clearly the biggest yet, spilling into a new hall, but it certainly wasn't the most exciting, with most of the good stuff on show being titles MEAN MACHINES has covered for release this Christmas. Also traditional is 'lies, damned lies and release schedules'. Many companies are prone to making outrageous claims about the number of games they'll have out within the next two 'quarters' and this show is no exception, with plenty of sheepish explanations for the non-arrival of games we were promised yonks ago. Still this is ECTS.

SONIC IS DEAD! LONG LIVE SONIC!

SONIC ???

BY SONIC TEAM

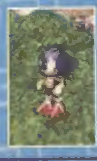
SATURN

RELEASE 1997

ORIGIN: JAPAN

Sonic X-mimics as Michael Jackson would put it, his-story. Sega have 'suspended' the project indefinitely, which should have a release, as our insider put it, when Hell freezes over. The official explanations are vague and on the lines of releasing the game within the earliest of Sega's other software coming up for release, but it has been an open secret since E3 that some influential people in Japan were unhappy with the project, saying it failed to capture the spirit of the previous Megadrive titles. Yuji Naka, sonic's creator and the producer of NiGHTS, could hardly be made to speak well of it in interviews, but he may have had a hand in the decision to 'can' the project.

But even as one Sonic kicks it, another rises from the ashes and almost at the same time Sega announce that the Megadrive title previewed in the issue as Sonic 2D, will be converted to Saturn and, finally, will be out before Christmas! A list of upgrade features including polygonal Sonic, texture-mapped environments, 'climate' features, new bonus stages and 'red book' audio (ie the music on CD) were announced to go with it. It does sound like the Sonic title to inspire you then, ricky thump. ANOTHER Sonic game started appearing on the Net just days after that! This is a separate project to Sonic 3D, with no direct involvement of Yuji Naka, and rumoured to use a 3D engine similar to NiGHTS. Sega have confirmed the game exists and that it is a 1997 release, with the intention it squares-up to the best PlayStation and N64 software out then. So farewell, Sonic X-Treme, but in all honestly, good riddance too.



MEAN MACHINES' newshounds have cast their net far and wide this month for news and gossip from Britain's foremost coders and Japan's celebrity arcade developers. Sports, RPGs, big naff-off coin-op machines: all here.

KEY

CALL OF THE WILD

WILD 9

BY SHINY

SATURN

RELEASE APRIL '97

ORIGIN: USA

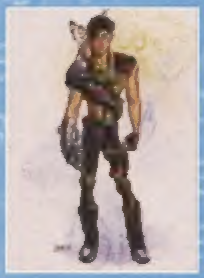
The creative team behind Earthworm Jim are back! Shiny Entertainment have begun to release details of Wild 9, their first original Saturn title, which is scheduled for release in Spring next year. Wild 9 is an entirely new development, all new characters and scenario and a custom game engine which is allowing Shiny to create a complete 3-D world for their mad platformer.

The central character is Wex, a young space dude who crash lands in a distant solar system. Wex's nemesis is Kern, a vast hive of evil the size of two football pitches which hangs suspended from the roof of a monstrous palace at the other end of the galaxy. Wex has to travel across nine stages to confront Kern's armed forces with eight other space rangers who make up the Wild 9 team. These characters come to life as vivid illustrations drawn by Shiny's graphic artists.

The game also boasts "the most powerful weapon ever seen in a console game", an innovative device. Wex discovers called the "rig". This takes the form of a power glove and winding snake attachment, that winds itself around Wex in rather unsettling fashion. The rigs designed as a flexible piece of weaponry that will reveal the true extent of its power as the player becomes more adept. At the moment, we are aware of a creature who dwells inside it known as Bengus, who becomes an ally for Wex throughout the adventure.

Graphically, the game is to the earliest imaginable stage, with Shiny saying all the work to date has gone on creating a stunning new game engine, that deploys a platform environment in true 3D and will enable the game to store 60,000 separate animations! (Jim 2, by comparison, used just 3,000). The brief video demonstration of what Wild 9 should be capable of was more than a little amazing and should give certain other platform game programmers something to chew on.

Wild 9's team claim the game will have all the humour and playability of the Jim games, while exploiting the 32-bit hardware to the full and using the capacity offered by CD. Shiny also received loads of compliments for its other title, MDK, which is currently being programmed for PC CD.



GRANDIOSE

GRANDIA

BY GAME ARTS

SATURN

RELEASE 1997

ORIGIN: JAPAN

Described as the "second-biggest pull of the Tokyo Game Show" (remember VF3 was there), Grandia is an RPG that's getting attention in a country where you get an RPG in your cornflakes every morning. But Grandia has been three years in development and, unusually for an RPG, looks the dog's tits. Game Arts are coordinating this massive project, with the game consisting of, yoiks, several hundred render locations. Unlike other RPGs, these are displayed in true 3D — everything in the game is polygonal, so the player can zoom in to an extraordinary level of close-up detail, or play the game from a bird's eye view with an entire town mercilessly in your sights. The humour are going all over Grandia and can hardly wait until next year for it. Nor, for that matter, can we.

OHH! ME TACKLE

JONAH LOMU RUGBY

BY CODEMASTERS

SATURN

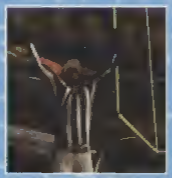
RELEASE EARLY 1997

ORIGIN: UK

Codemasters sign another star to their Sportsmaster label by scooping Jonah Lomu to endorse their new Rugby game, due next February. The 3D sports simulation features four stunning light-sourced stadiums and 32 of the sport's top international teams. Jonah Lomu is a joint development between Codemasters and Rage software, who previously coded a rugby game for the Megadrive a few years back. The new codies game boasts an intelligent camera viewing system that zooms in on the rough and tumble elements of Rugby; mauls, rucks and scrums. Sophisticated AI means that the game cannot be won by the human player alone — using the skills of the rest of the computer-controlled team is essential, yet Codies claim it will use an "arcade" approach so that detailed knowledge of the rules of Rugby is not necessary. The game also hopes to make the most of the controller science that makes the game the world's second most popular team spectator sport. The 6'4", 19 stone bulk of Jonah himself will probably figure in that.

LET'S PLAY BALL

JOHN MADDEN '97
BY EA
SATURN
RELEASE LATE '96
ORIGIN: USA



One of the landmark games of the 16-bit era, John Madden's football is finally making the leap to Saturn. John Madden's traditionally the beginning and end in American Football, featuring all 100 teams of the US NFL and all their details, down to underpant size. Now, records of teams even go back to the 1950s and 60s! Players (that's can be 1-at jumo between players on the team, but as much of the game is given over to strategic play by selecting 'plays' from a series of sub-menus. Any 32-bit game is incomplete without a fancy new 3D engine, and Madden's 97 comes in as 'isometric', where the variety of field level and angle views allow you to play the game in different ways, including camera panning for on-screen passing.

SPORT IT OUT

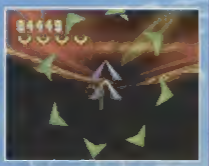
NHL '97, PGA '97, NBA LIVE '97, FIFA '97
BY EA
SATURN
RELEASE 96-97
ORIGIN: USA

EA Sports — once great, now aiming to be a force in games once again with a raft of annual updates of their classic sports licenses. All of a sudden, EA '97 apart, are two titles on the Saturn since EA sat out last Christmas. Fifa will undoubtedly be the main attraction (both Fifa '96 and Fifa '95 sold more than any other UK title last year. The main aim has been to improve the 3D engine, animation and player AI, all of which came in for some stick last year. Other new features are team and player attributes (Vinnie Jones will behave accordingly), 5-a-side indoor tournies, and a high-speed game option to finally disprove Fifa's reputation for plodding gameplay. Other titles all use the same level of detail and motion captured player animations.

VECTOR MAD

TEMPEST 2000
BY INTERPLAY
SATURN
RELEASE DECEMBER
ORIGIN: UK

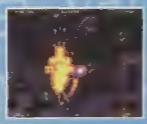
15 years ago, Atari made the best coin-ops Tempest is one classic, largely forgotten (unl hippy programming genius Jeff Minter created an update for Atari's ass-poor Jaguar system last year, which proved to be the only worthwhile game on the machine. Now that game is due for a surprise conversion onto Saturn. Tempest is set on an infinite collection of 3D webs, with the player controlling a tiny polygonal craft riding it at the near end. Enemies advance from the far end, and the game's simple aim is to blast them before they make it. Graphically the game is minimalist, but captures the coolness of the coin-op with its mesmeric, compulsive blasting action. If the conversion is halfway decent, this should be a compulsory crumble purchase for serious gameplayers.



THE X-FILE

X2
BY TEAM 17
SATURN
RELEASE DECEMBER
ORIGIN: UK

Liquid-eating programmers to a man, Team 17 are producing X2, a homage to the type of blaster sending masters must have killed time on during f'R Strike against Maggie Thatcher. It's a 32-bit, bells and whistles (or should that be hippies?) sequel to Project X. Team 17's blaster on the Amiga (right). Vertical and horizontal stages, ceaseless action, fancy power-ups, huge bosses. Should give Darius 2 a good rogering.

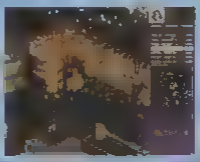


LESSON IN MARKETING NO. 1

You are the PR guy for a company making joypads. You want the mags to print a picture of your new pad. But MEAN MACHINES don't like printing joypad pictures. You dream up a cunning plan. Flatter the mag's editor by taking a picture of the joypad and the mag, then write a little personal press release. Ploy works. The Tecnoplus Megadrive pad is only £9.99, has six buttons and auto-fire mode. Buy it kids!

JUNIOR KICKSTART

LUNATIC FRINGE



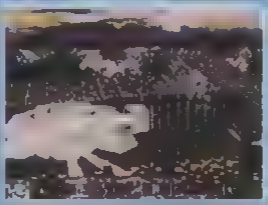
EAT OUR SHORTS

GOING BALLISTIC

POINT

GOSSIP

CONTRA-VERSY



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CREAM OF SEGA

Absolutely no points for working out what's topped the charts this month. As NIGHTS goes out, Sega think it may be their fastest-selling title ever. A fitting end to Cream of Sega as we know it, as from the next issue it ceases to exist! Don't worry, there will be plenty of chart action incorporated into our extended news section, with info on what's happening in Japan and the arcades, and of course, in your house.

HYPE CHART

We're coming to get you!

[redacted] These screenshots must be g[redacted] you.

[redacted] You can't wait until November. Th[redacted] going to be a revolution.

[redacted] Now the readers' favourite.

[redacted] Be excited. Be very excited.

[redacted] A few more weeks and Lara will be in your palms.

KEEP 'EM COMING!

The mailbag for Cream of Sega is getting pretty impressive. But from next month we want you to send your entries to READERS CHARTS at the same address. Same info, mind, and the same chance of winning a prize for your chart prediction. The last Cream of Sega winner is Adam Greaves of Salford.

MY TOP THREE SATURN GAMES ARE

I'M MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO

I PREDICT THE MOST POPULAR GAME WILL BE

NAME
ADDRESS

Send to: Reader's Chart, MEAN MACHINES SEGA, EMAP Images Ltd, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

SALES CHART: SATURN

Chart Track's guide to the best-selling CDs

[redacted] The Sonic phenomenon sweeps [redacted] steal this month's honours.

[redacted] The bitch looks more than capable of storming onto the bestseller list.

[redacted] Too late! You, lot didn't wait.

[redacted] Another new entry! This is a serious shake up of the chart scene.

[redacted] It's nice to see playability still stands for something.

[redacted] There must have been games starvation about for all these new entries.

[redacted] AM3's masterpiece shows signs of slipping at last.

[redacted] Who would thought this would still be Top Ten? Us.

[redacted] Some people are still discovering this murder-fest for the first time.

[redacted] Makes a reappearance, just before Fifa '97 makes its.

SALES CHART: MEGADRIVE

Chart Track's guide to 16 bit

[redacted] Cricket: Megadrive's selection. Moove.

[redacted] One and two in the chart. Impressive.

[redacted] They manage to wriggle up a place on last month's showing.

[redacted] Last year's biggest seller. But there's always some slowcoach.

[redacted] Your best bet until Sonic 3D arrives.

[redacted] Escape from this game, more like.

[redacted] Now this is a game. Give me this game.

[redacted] The movie may be a memory, but the game's still frish.

[redacted] Hurrah! Top ten at last... after two years.

[redacted] These are the cut-price classics y see. Great value.

[redacted] CHART

Mother knows best

[redacted] [redacted] is still our favourite game. And [redacted] remain so.

[redacted] [redacted] conversion, believe us.

[redacted] The tiny taste we've had has left us hungry for more.

[redacted] Great. Apart from the bug that wipes your memory (import only).

[redacted] More than a pair of moist Y-fronts. Blam is one mean mother of a game.

READERS CHART SATURN

Free-thinking individuals

[redacted] Firmly established as your favs.

[redacted] You love the gang, you f'in love 'em.

[redacted] Once again, Panzer getting the credit it deserves.

[redacted] You played it, you loved it.

[redacted] The conversion went down well then sir.

JAM HO

Tokyo's JAMMA Show (Japanese Arcade

PICK 1

PICK 4

PICK 3

PICK 2

MMA OT!

PICK 5

PICK 6

PICK 7

PROJECT

PUBLISHER

RELEASED

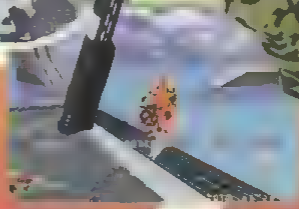
RELEASE FORMAT

DEVELOPERS

It's good when it's one-on-one. Gaming that is. Head to head gaming is as old as the hills, well as old as Atari Combat, the charming cartridge that came with the VCS. Virtual On is basically an update of the old concept of lining up your tank and taking your best shot. Now, match, it's huge robot against huge robot with the latest armoury of guided missiles and smart bombs with eye-popping kaleidoscopic explosions.

JAPS ARE MAD FOR IT

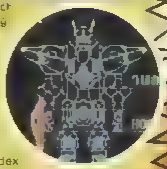
The conversion of AM3's arcade Virtua On is of massive interest to the Japanese. In early 96 it was King of the arcades there and player's guides and special on on the Saturn version have rarely been out of the Japanese mags. The Brits may catch on belated y purely on the basis of the quality of the conversion, which is shaping up to be pretty awesome. Echoing many of the games in the Virtua series, players are given a choice of distinct character robots each with custom weapons and styling. These range from a shapely lady VR Fei Yen with a heart shaped love beam to the lumbering Big Bad Bow which dispenses most woe at close range with its huge hydraulic arms.

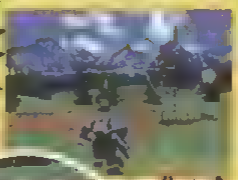


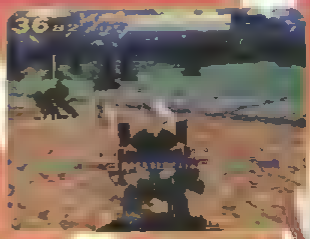
VIRTUAL ON
CYBER TROOPERS

TAKE YOUR BEST SHOT

The game scenario is simple. Two robots face each other in a square arena, with a few blocks offering limited cover. There's complete freedom to move around, and movement is high speed. The aim is to ambush your opponent from the best vantage point, discharging your weapons, sidestepping his retaliation. Your three main attacks work differently at very close range or from the air, which is a real position of strength. Weapons need to charge between uses, adding an element of restraint and strategy to the proceedings. Special moves, performed by joystick dexterics are the preserve of the seasoned player.







THE VBORGS

Eight robots for you to take into the fray. The game's cutscreens depict them as gargantuan, served by a battalion of tiny human technicians

RBV-01-A TEMJIN

The all-rounder Virtual Raid with the benefit of speed, good armour and a respectable complement of weapons. Almost the Ryu or Akira of Virtua On.

WEAPONS Rifle * Beam Sword * Bomb

RBV-02-E RAIDEN

The VR with the single most powerful weapon. Raiden's laser. He also has the advantage of the best armour. Manoeuvreability is his weakness.

WEAPONS Bazooka * Ground Bomb * Laser

TBV-00-H VIPER II

Structurally identical to a fighter jet, all moves are of the Temjin Raid. Consequently jumping height and dash speed are much enhanced. It also has one of the best all round weapons complements.

WEAPONS Vulcan * 7-way missile * Homing Beam

RBV-10-B DORRAS

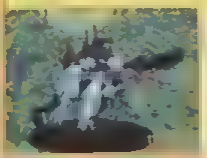
A scaled down version of the Raiden model but with its own advantages, including the penetrating Phalanx attack and a usefulness at close range combat.

WEAPONS Fireball * Hammer * Phalanx

TBV-00-C APHARMD

Twin Dragon provides the structural model, though Apharmd's a speed-boosted model, and armed with an unparalleled close-range sword weapon, the Tongfer. Getting any joy from Apharmd's other weapons requires excellent aiming.

WEAPONS Shotgun * Bomb * Tongfer



SBV-07-D BELGDOR

Raiden again with the high level of armour but increased mobility. Belgdor's homing missile, most effective from the air, is a significant factor in long-range battles, but it's high mounting leads to stability problems.

WEAPONS Grenade * Napalm * Homing Missile

BBV-14-B FEI-YEN

The reliable all-round robot. Fei-Yen is predictably lighter weaker and more shapely than the other VRs, but noticeably more agile. She also features a unique Hyper mode activated when her energy falls below half - her attacks become twice as powerful.

WEAPONS Hand Beam * Bowgun * Heart Beam

RBV-13-(1)
BAL-BAS-BOW

Built differently to all others, Bal-Bas-Bow uses a levitational movement system and as such is a struggle to control. Ordnance is weak but homes effectively on opponents. The VR is vunerable at close range and the runt of the VO litter.

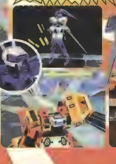
WEAPONS Ring Laser * Floating Mines * Hand Bit

PICK UP STICKS

An interesting facet of the conversion has been [illegible] the arcade's distinctive double joystick controls. The elaborate [illegible] has two analogue sticks for [illegible]. Firstly, the joypad controls have been [illegible] and are more than adequate, although the use of every button makes [illegible] game to play. But purists will be heart[illegible] by the special joystick designed by AM3, which emulates [illegible] will be available as a game and [illegible] seems to becoming something of a fash on

SPLIT PERSONALITIES

Two player action [illegible] Virtual On [illegible] is recognised in the [illegible] split-screen mode, which looks like maintaining the standard of the single player game in terms of speed and playability. There are other plans afoot for interaction [illegible]. The first of these is a link-up mode using that [illegible] Later a network version should be available [illegible]



WORK IN PROGRESS

Never has so much crap been said about a conversion as has been said about AM2's Saturn conversion of Daytona USA. For just about every bit of praise the game received, there was a moan: "It was only one-player", "the clipping was bad", "there were only three tracks", "the music was naff".

MEAN MACHINES was not amongst the detractors. The game scored 94% and, while the shortcomings were dutifully brought to your attention, we never lost sight of the fact that AM2 produced an excellent piece of gameplay. As for the main argument, that the backgrounds popped-up in an ugly fashion, fair comment. But that's not a weakness of Saturn, it's down to the wide-view and open space that are part of Daytona. You can make a racing game that cleverly disguises that with tunnels and lots of sharp bends, but the whole point of Daytona is the open road. Nevertheless, Sega, particularly Sega Europe did not want to leave it at that. Hence Daytona USA Championship Circuit Edition. A mouthful of a title so you'll forgive us if we just call it Daytona CCE from now on.

Daytona CCE's team (drawn partly from the Sega Rally conversion) has taken these complaints on board and produced an update that brings new tracks, smarter graphics and a two-player split-screen mode. The game will also have in-built compatibility with the forthcoming Netlink device, which will eventually provide multi-player network gaming for Saturn. You'll have it all before Christmas.

DAYTO

A LA MODE

The new Daytona has a host of excellent options as Sega Rally including the ghost modes, which allow you to race against a car which represents your best arcade times.

POP UP STORY

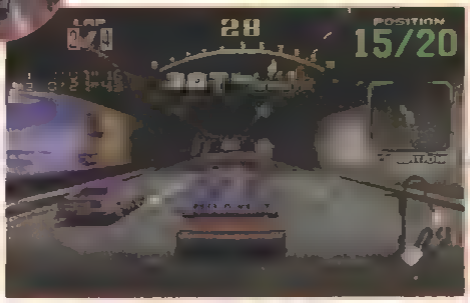
CCE's team are working on reducing the occasions that large chunks of scenery suddenly appear in the foreground. This is still an ongoing process but they have had some success so far, with elements like the bridge on the Sega Galaxy track that once

It's almost 18 months since AM2 released Daytona USA in Japan. Time to give the old slapper a scrub-up.

ONA CCE

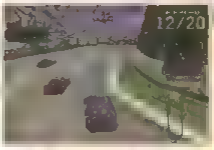
FAIRGROUND ATTRACTION

...roadside a Theme Park with a huge Ferris Wheel and rollercoaster providing trackside scenery. There's also a nasty chicane which provides a point for potential pile-ups. This track seems slotted between the easy Speedway track and moderately difficult dinosaur track in terms of challenge.



ROLLING REMIX

...is distinctively dreary music was not an option, and just to make sure we don't get another dose of the ... Sega have had a last ... gives ... to ... Joe's ... away. She is in fact sticky smooth. There's also new house and drum-and-bass tracks for the new circuits.



MAKEOVER

Work has gone ... improvements which Daytona fans should notice. These include:

Addition of transparent glass screens ... 777 Speedway ... increased ... tion on ... maps ... ple of the ... well on ... track, ... more ... Sonic ... Crest ... the rear window of the car that ... its movement.

COMING NEXT

We're not sure if you're still not sure if you want a Daytona CCE alongside your ... for Daytona USA.

GRID runner

Futuresport' first emerged as a concept in the sixties, and provided lots of opportunity for 70s movies to dress actors up in Mr.Kot wrappers and trundle around steel-floored arenas on roller-skates. How we laughed when said concepts were predicted to replace football and cricket. But someone must have been laughing — we've got 'Gladiators. Sharron Davies is the future!

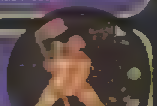
Virgin does not have the world's 38th sexiest woman (according to FHM) to front its new highly technical futuresport puzzler. It has you and a mate, in a game of Intergalactic rig. Grid Runner's 60 zones work on a single simple precept, but get gradually more complicated by the environment and the increasing cunning of your devious opposition.

AARON SPELLING

Players augment their natural abilities with supernatural ones. There are a range of spells employed including teleportation (usually and pre-ring bridges (very useful) as well as offensive weapons that blow your opponent. These powers drain your magical reserves, which must be replenished on a trolley-dash the bonus maze.

ARMY OF ONE

You may have figured that Grid Runner is designed for two players. And indeed the game accomodates them both with a split-screen window mode. But people shunned because they were once fooled to have skills, will be delighted with the range of computer characters (space monster types) who have defined characters and remarkable sneaky Artificial Intelligence.

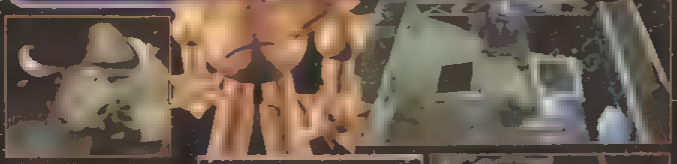


GRIDDLED

Grid Runner is a series of suspended mazes, starting as simple affairs and growing into multi-screen labyrinths. The landscape is laid out in square tiles, with bridges, teleporters, barriers and speed ups as features dotted around the layouts. The key elements are the flags, which each player is trying to possess.

CHASE ME! CHASE ME!

Grid Runner is one-on-one tag. On each round, the competitors are set a target of flags to possess. This is done by simply touching it, changing its colour. However, one of the players is always 'It'. The 'It' player cannot change flags, as the other player has, as Henry Cooky would say, 'control of the game'. All the 'It' player can do is 'infect' his rival by touching him, instantly switching status.



I CLEAN MY FACE WITH **OXY DAILY WASH** EVERY MORNING BECAUSE I DON'T WANT SPOTS. IT CLEANS MY PORES OF THE MUCK AND GREASE THAT CAUSES THEM. **SPOTS? OXYCUTE 'EM!**

PROJECT

PUBLISHER

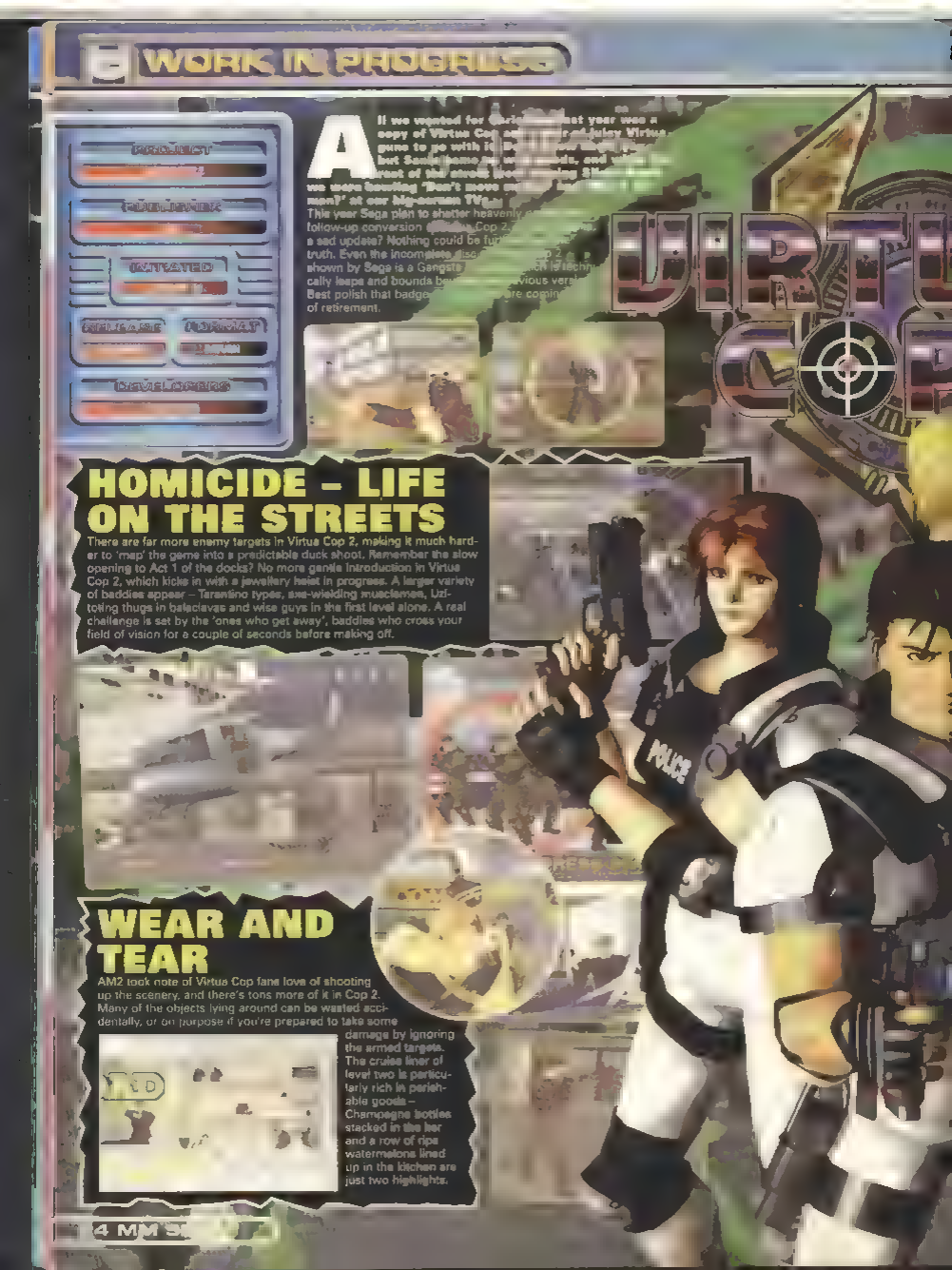
INITIATED

RELEASE | FORMAT

DEVELOPERS

All we wanted for Christmas last year was a copy of Virtua Cop and a Saturn to play Virtua Cop on to go with it. We got our wish, but Santa came up with a couple of lumps of coal in the form of the woeful Saturn conversion. So we were taunting 'Dan's more expensive than Christmas!' at our big-screen TV...

This year Sega plan to shatter heavenly [illegible] follow-up conversion of Virtua Cop 2 [illegible] a sad update? Nothing could be further from the truth. Even the incomplete disc [illegible] shown by Sega is a Gangsta [illegible] cally leaps and bounds be[illegible] vious version. Best polish that badge [illegible] re cosmic of retirement.



HOMICIDE – LIFE ON THE STREETS

There are far more enemy targets in Virtua Cop 2, making it much harder to 'map' the game into a predictable duck shoot. Remember the slow opening to Act 1 of the docks? No more gentle introduction in Virtua Cop 2, which kicks in with a jewellery heist in progress. A larger variety of baddies appear – Tarantino types, axe-wielding musclemen, Uzi-toting thugs in balaclavas and wise guys in the first level alone. A real challenge is set by the 'ones who get away', baddies who cross your field of vision for a couple of seconds before making off.

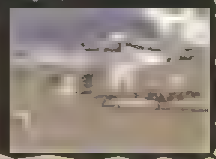
WEAR AND TEAR

AM2 took note of Virtua Cop fans love of shooting up the scenery, and there's tons more of it in Cop 2. Many of the objects lying around can be wasted accidentally, or on purpose if you're prepared to take some damage by ignoring the armed targets. The cruise liner of level two is particularly rich in perishable goods – Champagne bottles stacked in the bar and a row of ripe watermelons lined up in the kitchen are just two highlights.

COP 2

FOLLOW THROUGH

You now have a choice of routes on each of the three levels, picked by shooting the signs after the second act. These take you through totally different areas, increasing the game's longevity.



THE SET PIECE

In Cop 2 the action is made more interesting by scene-setting, rather than just strolling through picking off targets, and the size of each level is roughly twice that of Virtua Cop. Learn to expect the unexpected:

CAR CHASE

Cars spin across the path of your pursuit, pedestrians flee, hostages hang perilously from rear windows.

DOCK AREA

An enemy chopper tries to land and offload its cargo of terrorists amid the crossfire.

PORT BUILDING

The reservation desk provides cover for hostiles elements. They didn't reckon on the monitors above their heads.

BALLROOM

It's a game of hide and seek, as terrorists hide under the tables, and then assault you from the band stage.

PROJECT

PUBLISHER

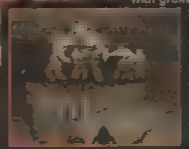
INITIATED

RELEASE FORMAT

DEVELOPERS

When the Saturn was released in Japan in 1994, one of the first games promised was a conversion of id software's seminal 3D blastathon Doom. Sadly, this was not to be, and the game sank into that deep, dark pit of obscurity otherwise known as 'development hell'. Now, nearly two years later, Off have picked up and dusted down the Jaguar's, and the game is FINALLY nearing completion.

When Doom was first released on the PC in 1993 it was hailed as a landmark title. You can tell it is was something special, because everyone seems to remember where they were the first time they saw it. In terms of gameplay it wasn't that far removed from its predecessor Wolfenstein 3D, but in terms of technical accomplishment it was streets ahead. Doom's texture mapped effects managed to generate something that most video games can only dream of. Atmosphere.



with grunts and wails coming from all directions, not knowing what creepy dude around the next corner is truly a terrifying experience. And pretty soon Saturn owners will be able to feel the fear for themselves.

LINK UP FRENZY!

[illegible] this [illegible] play [illegible] levels [illegible] Deathmatch Players [illegible] either work [illegible] to complete the levels [illegible] or battle it against each [illegible] to see who was the best, even cooler [illegible] is this aspect of Doom that has shaped the future of multiplayer gaming [illegible] Quakeworld. It's a feature that has made it to the Saturn version. Set to use the link up cable released later this year, Doom will allow two Saturns to connect together for an unparalleled deathmatch frag frenzy. Trust us: it's the dog's!

MONSTER MUNCH

[illegible] hell aren't a pretty sight. [illegible] military outposts that form Earth's defence. They are [illegible]

FORMER HUMAN

SARGENT

IMPS

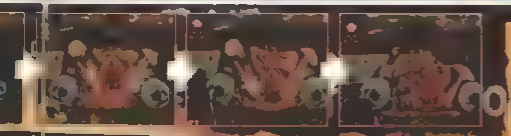
DEMON

CHAINGUN DUDE

SPECTRE

LOST SOUL

CACODEMON



UP YOUR ARSENAL!

There may well be an army of salivating monsters out to rip you limb from limb, but at least you've got some heavy duty ordinance on your side. Here's the low down on all the weapons you can secure in Saturn Doom, including the big boy in the black - the BFG 9000! Go slap some lead upside their head.

KNUCKLE DUSTER

CHAINSAW

PISTOL

SHOTGUN

SUPER SHOTGUN

CHAINGUN

ROCKET LAUNCHER

PLASMA GUN

BFG 9000

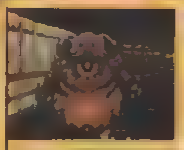
CHAINSAW

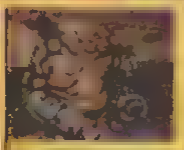
AMALGAMATION

There have been so many versions of Doom that Saturn owners may be a tad confused as to exactly what they're getting. Well it's like this, Saturn Doom is primarily based on the PlayStation version. Doom Special Edition. The levels (52 in all), monsters, monster placing and music are all the same (so no Arch Viles or Spider Masterminds I'm afraid). However, Saturn Doom also has a lot in common with the PC version, namely the sound effects and the overall graphical feel. Does this make it the best version of Doom yet? You'd better tune in next month to find out.

CYBERDEMON

ARACHNOTRON


PAIN ELEMENTAL


MANCUBUS

REVENANT

HELLKNIGHT

BARON OF HELL

PROJECT

PUBLISHER

DEVELOPER

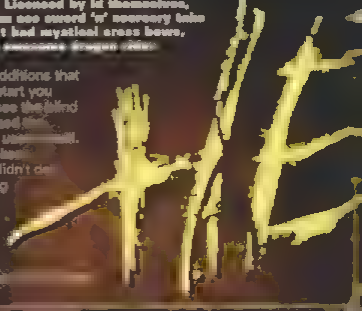
RELEASE

PLATFORM

DEVELOPER'S

The success of Doom inevitably spawned a number of clones, none of which were as good as id's original. One of the better attempts, however, was Raven Software's Heretic. Licensed by id themselves, Heretic utilised the Doom engine to do an axe sword 'n' sorcery take on the familiar 3D shoot 'em up genre. It had mystical cross bows, wands, gargoyle, wizards, giant minotaurs and an awesome dragon. Ahh- Stud boss.

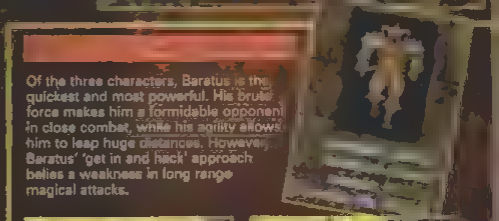
Heretic also benefited from a number of gameplay additions that gave it the edge over the other Doom clones. For a start you could look up and down, allowing players to finally see the blind spots that plagued Doom. Secondly, Heretic introduced the concept of items that could be collected, stored and used at will. And thirdly, you could turn your opponents into chickens. Heretic never received a wide release, however, so didn't do very well. However, this didn't stop Raven from going ahead with a sequel: Hexen. Hexen was loads better than Doom or Heretic, and was in fact, the number one PC 3D shooter right up until Duke Nukem 3D and Quake. It had better graphics, better sound, cooler items AND you could turn your opponents into pigs! Awesome! And guess what's coming to a console named after a planet...



THE STORY SO FAR

Being a sequel and all, Hexen is actually the second instalment in the ongoing Serpent Rider saga. In the original Heretic, an elven champion from the Sidhe tribe rose up to free his world from slavery by defeating the fiendish [illegible] Korax. He succeeded, but that still left two even more powerful serpent riders floating about, who were determined not to make the same [illegible] mistake. In Hexen you [illegible] – the mighty Korax – [illegible] in case you were [illegible] trilogy sees a third Heretic instalment that uses the Quake graphics engine. Can't wait.

The Cleric fourth weapon - The Jawdiser - shoots a couple of razor sharp spinning discs that do not return to the caster. It's handy for picking off enemies from a distance or when you're getting low on ammo. The Jawdiser is also a very powerful weapon in close combat.



Of the three characters, Baratus is the quickest and most powerful. His brute force makes him a formidable opponent in close combat, while his agility allows him to leap huge distances. However, Baratus' 'get in and hack' approach belies a weakness in long range magical attacks.

A Left and a right! Ooh!

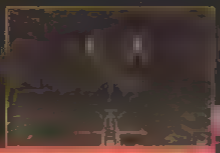
Electro-charged axe of doom!

[illegible] ABILITIES

[illegible] advantage on the RPG nature of Hexen, you can choose to play as one of three different character 'classes'. Each with their own weapons and physical attributes. Each character can [illegible] to four different character specific weapons, all of which [illegible] a mixture of green and blue mana. One nice twist is that the all powerful 'BFG 9000' weapons are split into multiple [illegible] and you've got to [illegible] all the bits before you can [illegible]

Throwy flaming hammers!

HEXEN



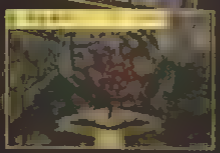
PARIAS THE ELVEN

Parias is a well balanced character, with good close and long range offensive capabilities. His speed and stamina are both decent, while the serpent staff allows him to drain health and energy from monsters to replenish his own supply! Parias is probably the easiest character to use, thus making him an ideal choice for novice Hexeners.

DAEDOLON THE MAGE

Many foolish humans underestimate the power of Daedolon. His physically frail body belies awesome magical powers that make Daedolon second to none in long range combat. However, his low stamina and speed make him a character that only experienced Hexen players can use to proper effect.

Club 'em! Club 'em!



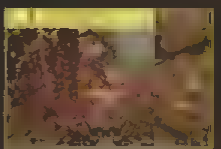
Shoots venom and sucks life!

A limitless supply of rapid darts

Freeze 'em then blast 'em!

Cook some monster steak!

Arcs of electric death!



Ultra Powerful homing spheres

PROJECT
SEGA AGES

PUBLISHER
Sega

INITIATED
Issue 316

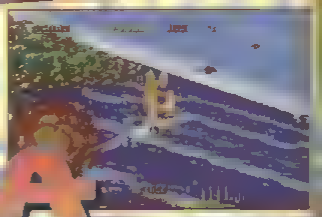
RELEASE
Out now

FORMAT
Saturn

DEVELOPER
Sega

As our resident office retro-king, Dave Kelsall, reminds us all on a daily basis: 'old games are great!'. Er, right Dave. But while most 'old' games are about as welcome as a bowl of pork scratchings at a Jewish dinner party, there are still quite a few 'retro classics' out there that we wouldn't mind seeing receive the Saturn treatment...

Riding the current wave of nostalgia, Sega have decided to re-release arcade perfect conversions of three of their most popular retro games. Afterburner, Space Harrier and the immortal OutRun. In Japan these games where released on three seperate CD's, and al. d d pretty well for themselves. But over here, Sega have decided to put ALL THREE GAMES onto ONE DISC! Excellent! There are also plans to release Alien Syndrome, Galaxy Force (pool!), and Power Dr.ft

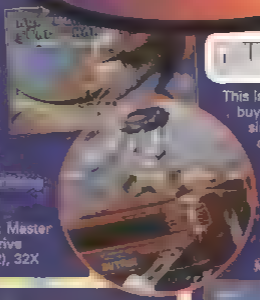


SEGA AGES

SPACE HARRIER (1984)

On its initial release Space Harrier was remarkable not just for its amazing sprite scaling technology and lightening paced gameplay, but also for its unique hydraulic cabinet. You controlled your on-screen hero with what resembles a helocopter control stick, and the cabinet moved with you. For those who don't remember, Space Harrier is a bizarre 'into the screen' shoot 'em up featuring dragons, giant gremlin heads.

PREVIOUS CONVERSIONS: Master System, Megadrive (Space Harrier 2), 32X



OUTRUN (1986)

This is the game that most die hard Sega fans will buy the Ages pack for! Yu Suzuki's brilliant racing sim was originally released in a hydraulic Ferrari cabinet complete with steering wheel and gear stick! And now, finally, an arcade perfect version is available to buy. Super fast sprite scaling action with 15 different stages, accompanied by some of the catchiest tunes in gaming history! Start your engines...

PREVIOUS CONVERSIONS: Master System, Megadrive (OutRun 2017)

AFTERBURNER (1987)

A personal favourite of mine. Take off from the aircraft carrier Sega and use missiles and machine guns to blast seven shades of hell out of the seemingly neverending supply of enemy forces. Destroy wave after wave of planes (and in the bonus stages, ground targets), look on with mi... fire. An... sprite sc... conversion...until now.

PREVIOUS CONVERSIONS: ... 2), Mega CD (Afterburner 3), 32X

Available on Saturn and PlayStation. Coming soon to PC CD-ROM

actua GOLF

"The best golf game ever"

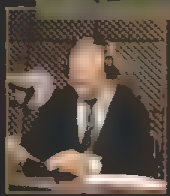
PlayStation Pro

92%
Total Saturn

9 out of 10
PSX Pro

4 out of 5 "The best PlayStation golf game"
C&VG

8 out of 10
PlayStation Star Player Award
Official PlayStation Magazine



Featuring Peter Alliss - "The Voice of Golf"

- Live interactive commentary
- Spectacular scenery using 3D technology
- Two challenging courses to fully test your golfing skills
- True playing environment enabling total freedom of movement
- Fully customised players and [illegible] selection
- Multi-player options
- Multi-view shot tracking and [illegible]
- Save game options to track your improvement

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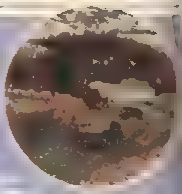
PREVIEWS

GREMLIN

1-2 PLAYERS

COMPLETE



THE CUTS

The scenes are detailed and wi...

...arting on 50m ...ed, ...soon descende... ...and bumps were... Junior Kickstart.

...k crews watch with ...nterest as you attem... ...narrower sand ...dunes and ne... ...tight ...

Pressuring some ...rehearsal sections of ... course, it's easy to lose sight of your opposition in the winding canyon.

The first half has you tolling up the track and crossing a crevasse on a narrow bridge. The second rewards you with an excellent downhill ...

Grip, as you might expect, is the issue here, with even the smallest hills requiring decent momentum to over...

...first racing game ... a live volcano, in our ... experience. The ash ... ...

STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 2

There are certain things in this world that just 'are' - a universal truth that exists regardless of humanity's arrogant and subjective scrutiny. When someone tells me that 'Star Wars was a bad film' that's their opinion, and they're entitled to it. But they're wrong. Likewise, when some says 'Street Fighter 2 isn't the best 2D beat 'em up ever made', they're wrong too. It just is.

Street Fighter 2 is getting on a bit now. We've had SF2: Champion Edition, SF2 Turbo, Super SF2, Super SF2 Turbo, SF2: The Movie, SF2: The Anime Game, SF Alpha and now, Street Fighter Alpha 2. In the near future we can look forward to X-Men Vs Street Fighter (Saturn Sound), Street Fighter 3D (not Saturn bound) and Street Fighter 3 (who knows?!). Before the word 'Boogaloo' and 'duel loves' spring to your lips, remember that this house is not dead. It's very much alive. And winning races. Each successive Street Fighter game has consistently improved on the last (ex for the Movie and Anime ones) and with Alpha 2 Capcom have reached the absolute zenith of 2D fighting games. And now, less than four months after its coin-op debut, it's coming to the Saturn. Oh joy.

WHAT'S NEW?

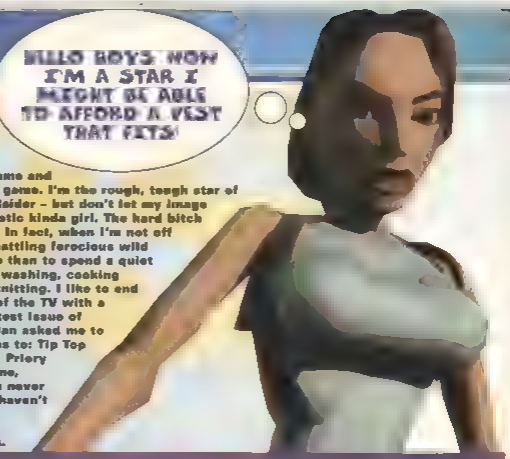
So what's new in Alpha 2? Well, the character starts here: custom combos, new moves and graphics for the old characters, brilliant new backgrounds, a refined chaining system, two alpha

...game 'dramatic battles', special arrings and most importantly five all new characters. Well, they're not really all new. There's Rolento from Final Fight, Cen from the original Street Fighter, Shadaloo and Zangief from

...Sakura. But they're all ace!

STREET FIGHTER
ALPHA

DAN'S TIPS



Wotcha. Allow me to introduce myself. Lara Croft's the name and dynamic archaeology's the game. I'm the rough, tough star of Core's new 3D epic Tomb Raider – but don't let my image fool you. I'm really a domestic kinda girl. The hard bitch image is just for the game. In fact, when I'm not off pillaging ancient ruins or battling ferocious wild animals I like nothing more than to spend a quiet evening at home doing the washing, cooking supper, perhaps a spot of knitting. I like to end the day curled up in front of the TV with a mug of Horlicks and the latest issue of Home & Garden. Anyway, Dan asked me to tell you to send all your tips to: Tip Top Tips, Mean Machines Sega, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. And you never know, if it's a new tip you haven't poached out of another magazine you may just win yourself a game! Love, Lara.

SATURN

LOADED

CHEAT MODE

The bods at Gremlin have seen fit to release this rather helpful Easter Egg. While [illegible] should give novice gamers a [illegible] set the levels in pause mode on the selection's BMG volume then press Z, B, C and R. Keeping each button held down. Once activated pressing L from the pause screen will access the cheat menu with various kinds of goodies.

GUN GRIFFON

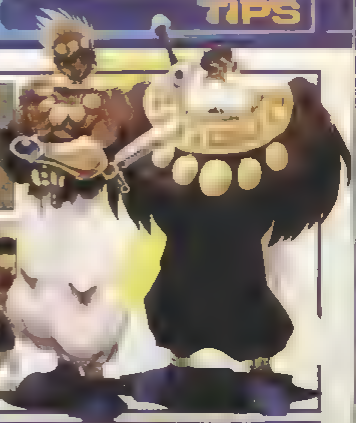
UNLIMITED AMMO

[illegible] suffered those [illegible] cheat on [illegible] battle [illegible] [illegible] cheat is [illegible] A the title screen press B, B, B, C then Start to reveal an unlimited supply of all [illegible]

STORY OF THOR 2

INCREDIBLE TWO PLAYER MODE!

We were beginning to think we had underrated this brilliant action/adventure title when along came this amazing cheat. Whilst playing the game press Z to call up the weapon menu, then hold X and press the 'L' Button. Release them and a second player will be added to the game! This second transparent Thor is controlled with the two player D pad and shares the same energy and sp rit bar as player one. Incredible!

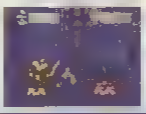


GUARDIAN HEROES

CONTINUES

For all those who bought the UK version of Treasure's incredible slash fest and are bitter that the incredible debug mode doesn't work, here are a couple of tips to help ease the pain. For 99 continues set the game on 'easy' difficulty and begin the game. Allow yourself to be killed after you have jumped out of the starting room and choose 'Give Up Now, return to the options mode and set the difficulty to hard. When you begin a Story Mode game again you should have 99 continues!

Also, make use of Nicole's 'I'm angry now' move (B+C) as even though it drains your HPs, it recovers a lot of magic points which can then be used to heal you and your party. This is a good way to get back magic points and gain levels quickly.



WORMS

EXTRA WEAPONS

MEGADRIVE

SAMPRAS '96

CHEATS

Here's a list of all the cheats on the password screen for every player, courtesy Chris Duckers of Shropshire. Cheers Chris!

POTTER
BDFDG
BDFGK
BDFH8
BDF
BDFKF

TURNETTE
BBFBG
BBFCH
BBFGC
BBFHJ
BBFKH

DELGADO
BGFCB
BGFFH
BGFGG
BGFHF
BGFFC
BGFKB

KURASAWA
BJFBG
BJFCH
BJFDD
BJFGC
BJFHJ
BJFKH

NINTZ
BCFCG
BCFDF
BCFFC
BCFBG
BCFHK
BCFKG

TUCKER
BHFCK
BHFD8
BHFGF
BHFHG
BHFJJ
BHFKK

GEVONOTT
BKFCG
BKFDF
BKFFC
BKFBG
BKFHK
BKFKG

SAMPRAS
FGFH
BFGCG
BFGHF
BFGF
BFGKB

ATHLETE KINGS WORK OUT

Sous spotty [illegible] as ex[illegible] the Sega [illegible] of months s[illegible] through [illegible] the [illegible] cheats and playing tips [illegible]

CHEATS

100M DASH: SKIP MODE

An [illegible] gives her [illegible] introduc[illegible] press up, Left, Down, Right, X in sequence. When the race starts your character will skip the way to the finish line.

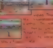
100M DASH: ROLL MODE

Set [illegible] skip mode press up, Left, Down, Right, Y, Up, Left, Down, Right, X before the race. The characters will do [illegible] the length of the track.

SHOT PUT: NEW METHOD

Another [illegible] is available [illegible] on [illegible], the action [illegible]. Start your [illegible] the [illegible] same as the discus event to get the character to rotate [illegible] throw. Also press [illegible] camera angle of the [illegible]

HIGH JUMP: NEW METHOD



Before your run up press left or right on the D-pad to select between three approach views. The [illegible] hand one is the [illegible] Fosbury Flop method. [illegible] we offer [illegible] the old [illegible] used [illegible] of the Fosbury [illegible]

BLIMP CONTROL

[illegible] where the [illegible] controlled by [illegible] the L and R [illegible] on the pad in [illegible]

PLAYING TIPS

ALL RUN-UP EVENTS

[illegible] the events give you more than enough [illegible] to achieve full speed. Rather than frantically [illegible] buttons from the off, pace yourself with a gradual build up of speed.

LONG JUMP

The key to huge distances over 9m is the extending move achieved by holding the action button after you have selected an angle. You should hear a second 'ping' denot[illegible]. Remember the opt[illegible] is 25 degrees.

SHOT PUT/DISCUS

Finding the pad rotation tricky? Use a rag, T shirt [illegible] socks. Twist the material into a [illegible] sized ball and rub it across the pad in circles. It works. Also start your rota[illegible] surges, with the [illegible] fully extended.

400M

The secret is not to go too easy. Use both buttons to catch your opponent [illegible] the bend, then [illegible] one button keeping the power level [illegible] the fourth stamina segment to conserve at least three bars of stamina [illegible] off the final bend when [illegible] home for sub 45 second times.

HIGH JUMP

Mark a position about a stride and a half away from the bar for takeoff. The leg flipping move [illegible] start it before you reach [illegible]

110M HURDLES

Nothing much apart from mark two strides between each hurdle, tap the buttons to shorten your stride and keep running as you jump.

POLE VAULT

People find this tricky because they [illegible] speed as they [illegible]. Build your speed to peak at the white line and lower and hold the pole at that point. [illegible] to run with at least one button [illegible] power! Release the pole ear[illegible] later to project yourself over the bar [illegible]

JAVELIN

It's vital to release the javelin at the last possible moment. Releasing early won't work because the character won't [illegible] the correct throwing position regardless of the power level. Watch to see the [illegible] back and release at the point shown here.

1500M RACE

The trickiest event. Your strategy is to [illegible] pace setter and set off into a strong lead. The CPU drones will catch up. As your energy fails drop to a single button and use the drones to push you [illegible] energy bar is replaced, set off again [illegible] a single stamina bar as [illegible] cover two [illegible]

LET KOMBAT BEGIN *AGAIN!*

OUT NOW TO BUY ON VIDEO

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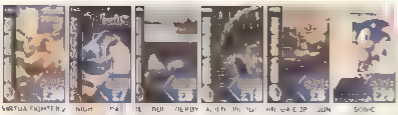

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THOR 2

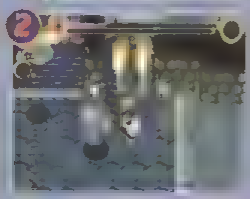
PART 1

No one does RPG guides like MEAN MACHINES. So we done another one, for the rather ace Thor on Saturn.

1. WATER SHRINE

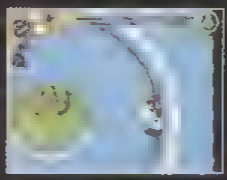
Make your way from the village chief's hut down into the shrine. Hit the switch on the left to open the steel door. In the next room, you may find some gifts by slashing the reeds. From now on, try all foliage in the hope of finding something. Make your way up the waterfall in the next chamber, push the iron pot onto the lever below and use it as a step onto the stone pillars, which take you to the chest containing a bow (1).

Continue into the room with the knight. Kill him and make your way to the next room, with moving platforms above you. You can reach the objects here by taking running jumps. In the next room equip your bow and shoot an arrow through the flames to the switch (2). This opens a door into an ante chamber. First approach the statue and press A until it glows, then B to receive a message from Rehart. Now take your bow and shoot a high shot at the flower bush on the right. A platform will appear. On this right side is a further room giving you a scroll. Use it with the glowing energy point to power your bow for three shots. At the door, use your magical energy (A button) to gain entry.



2. WATER SHRINE BOSS MANEEK

Maneek is simple. Use your sword so you can deflect his yellow crescent attacks. Watch for his jumps, as they create a circular tidal wave when he lands. If he starts to roll, run to the opposite corner. Use running sword attacks to bring him down.



3. FIRE SHRINE

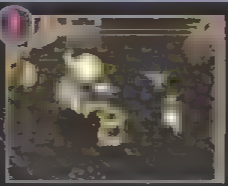
Make your way from the shrine back to the elder's hut. An earthquake will begin, so return to the shrine, but this time talk to the man waiting at the south doors. These will open, leading onto a path which will take you to the Fire Shrine. On all levels of the Shrine you will encounter spiders. These are best tackled by crouching (R button) Summon Dytto and use her to freeze the ice pillars ahead of you to form stepping stones (1). Use these to retrieve the rod from the red chest.

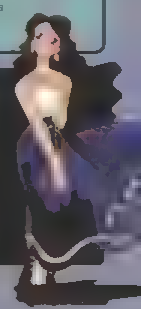
Also on this level, is a rock. Push it over the edge to reveal gifts. Now push the iron ball to the right and use it to scale the cliff. Select your rod to learn a new trick: the combination left, right, left, right + attack can break trees with light brown trunks (only that colour). Here this will bring a chest into your grasp that contains a gem. Any gems you find increase the powers of certain spirits (the aquamarine here will raise Dytto's level).

Now find the obelisk that instructs you about crouching. There is an opening just above it that leads to a chest and switch that will remove the door blocking stairs down. On the next floor you will encounter many dressed in red armour, skeletons and skeleton archers. Progress through to the fiery pits, where Dytto is required to eliminate the flames guarding the key to the lower floor (2). There is a blue circle on this level - a useful facility to always replenish your magical power. On the next level down go immediately right and use Dytto to extinguish the flame. Now banish her (X twice) to save magical energy. Now go to the left of the level and smash the tree trunks holding the ball. Jump across the upper level and smash the lone trunk to find the level key. Ignore the black chest - it's a trap. Go to the far right of the level and face a surprise attack from some soldiers. Beyond the twin torches is the boss.

4. FIRE SHRINE BOSS

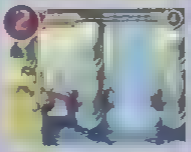
Dytto is very helpful here at neutralising the fireballs spewed forth. Watch for the boss' face appearing which is a preliminary to a hot breath attack so stay clear. Jump kicks are the best way to whittle down his energy, and once he's mobile, jump kicking is a safe way to repel him and finish him off.



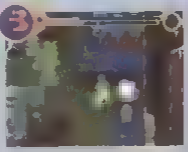


5. EARTH SHRINE

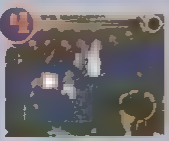
Returning to the village is not hard. A mysterious stranger has arrived. Speak to the elder first, then visit her in her hut. Return to the elder to receive his new commission – finding Bawu. The Earth Shrine is just west of the entrance to the Fire Shrine. Walk left and then along the river's edge, using Efreet to break the tree trunks with his breath (1). Jump down the small square hole and then ascend the long set of stairs. At the top walk right off screen and you'll find a gem on the edge of a cliff (2). Go back left and down to a second larger hole. Here there's a key in a chest that opens a door with a switch hidden under a bush in the next room. Lighting the torch will let you proceed.



Run through the next room, jump on the plant (jumpgrass) and head up. You are now in zombie territory. Efreet's Fire Torpedo (A twice) is an easy way to cut through the hordes in the room after the spiders. there is a key hidden in the reeds. Use this to open the bottom right door. Here is a new scroll, which works with the rod. Back in the preceding room is an energy point to go with it (3). With your Rod of Purification you can do various things. Firstly, go to skeleton in the top right hand part of that room and use it. He will respond. Now use it on the broad leafed plants – they will turn into Jumpgrass! The powered Rod will also dispatch all undead spirits with one attack. It looks good too.



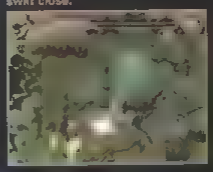
Use the plants to leave by the left exit. You enter a large open area – go down and to the right, passing the rock. Climb the steps in the next screen and return to push the rock off the ledge. Take the key and activate the bridge made of stepping stones. Jump down the hole directly beside these, then go south out of the screen, south again and across the stone walkway. Go far left, up the steps and along until you come to an archway created by another level. Use Efreet to melt some ice, then summon Dytto and use her to extinguish the flames. One hides a rod power orb (4). Charge your rod and use it to make jumpgrass at the bottom of the room. Climb out then travel up, passing through a narrow gap in the foliage on the right. You should come to a hole next to a torch. Make sure you have Efreet, as he will be lighting a torch when you land. Jump down. Go up and left, taking the ginger root from the chest. When you come to the sign about looking south, take a running jump directly south, and you'll find a chest containing the fourth weapon – a long sword!(6)



Return to the bottom jumpgrass and this time explore the other routes. There's a pad which creates a step between the ridge and the lower level, and a skeleton who may be revived with the rod's power (5). He rewards you with a path to another aquamarine. There are also two holes leading to the two keys you need to enter the boss' lair. The first door is in the bottom left of the room with all the flame pillars.

6. EARTH SHRINE BOSS

Take in Dytto and equip your long sword. Stand bottom left and hold B, waiting to release a spin attack when the tentacle passes. Once it is temporarily destroyed, rush in and make repeated strikes on the main part of the plant. Danger is signalled by the bud swelling. When the hornets erupt, use Dytto's water tornado to bring things to a swift close.

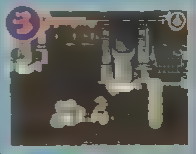


7. SOUND SHRINE

Collect Bawu and return, as the villager suggests, by the river. Talk first with the elder, then Myra, then back to the elder and then Myra, who will give you a cube and directions. There are two trees at the bottom edge of the town. Break the right hand one and collect a stone that gives you rod energy. Leave the town and use this to create jumpgrass at the first hill you come to. There's an aquamarine there. There's another jumpgrass close to the fence beside the pond. Jump into the water and go south – yet another aquamarine, and now Dytto will have a new power. She will now be able to create rod power instantly out of her own magical energy supply (press X once).

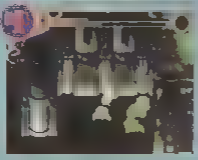
Summon Bawu outside the shrine. He will take it upon himself to swallow the ball blocking the entrance. You will face a large guard, then drop down the hole he creates. Go south taking Bawu to swallow the armorals (they cannot be killed). Cross the spike pit, collect the key (1), return to the start. Go right, but before going through the door, take the right passage and collect the sound scroll, which works in conjunction with your bow. In the room beyond the door is a water spout. Use it to summon Dytto and use her healing magic on the withered (grey) bud on the left (2). Now use your rod to create a jumpgrass, and cross the small wall to the chest. Open the door to the south with your new key.

Now you need Efreet. To find a flame use the passage to the shrine. You needn't go far – you can summon him with the blast from the enemy grenades if your timing is good enough! Use Efreet to light the three torches in the new room. Now you must change to Dytto once again, as the next room is a trap filled with roaming flames which must be put out, and the two switches turned. Leave the chamber and walk to the far right of the level, with a single switch next to a strange gaseous jet. Flicking this opens a steel door. In this room is a bush that conceals a spike. Use your weapon to propel the spike into the stone pillars, which are then destroyed (3). The spike will travel up the long passageway on the left. Wait until it returns and then walk up there to find lots of treasure chests.



7. SOUND SHRINE CONT...

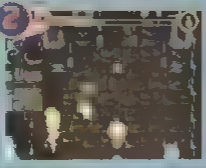
On the next floor use the plant to summon Bawu. Look carefully at the floor and you will see three small cracks (two are in the bottom half, which is on a separate screen) (4 prev ous page). Bawu will prise these open revealing water jets, activating the door to the south. In the back wall of this long rectangular room is a bush. Cut it away to reveal a low pas sage to crawl through. You can see 'an ancient weapon' which is released when three switches, represented a small stones, are crushed (1). This is down with the stone (left switch) and iron balls for the other two. Now you have bombs. Wa k further north in this area and you come to a room with grenaders in an advantageous position on an 'island' of stone. From a point on the stairs bottom-right, fire a high



arrow to knock the grenader onto a switch that will wipe out the enemy battalion and provide you with a means to reach the bonuses here, and a clue for later: 'Last, Left, left, right' (2). Go right back to the start and use your bombs as a delay device to allow you through the double doors. There are two spikes in the next room. Propel one down the steps and into the pillar-filled chamber. Make sure it destroys the final pillar at the top of the stairs, for this is where the key to the wooden door (bottom right of level). You can go so far as to guide it through the steel door out of this room and into the single stone pillar in the room full of grenaders, but only get a Rod scroll for your troubles (which you must already have by now).

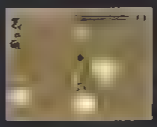
The next segment starts simply enough – call Bawu to consume the large iron ball (4). Now look for little dots on the floor that activate electric robots. Stay well clear of them until they've completed their task, signified by a little electronic whistle. Your aims are to light the bulbs, and move the iron balls off the switches. You'll get a Fire Scroll to use with your large sword which will let you destroy grey tree trunks. S e a slashes (double d-pad and B but ton) to slice through two at a time. Uncovering the three switches will give you access to the final bulb, which must be lit by one of the room's four electric sparks (3).

The next room has two elements. A 'new weapon' which is straight-forward to operate, and a robot powered by a single spark. Hit the robot to rotate it and guide it towards the box (1). Retrieve the key from the room to the left and go through the wooden door. On the next level you have to do some quick work in the room with trees and shrubs, then prepare for a battle. The next chamber has three switches to be set in three sequences from left to right: 1 Right, Left, Left, 2 Left, Right, Left, 3 Left, Right, Right. This opens the way to the boss (2).



8. SOUND SHRINE BOSS

The sand chamber is a game of hide and seek. First, stay away from the unfeatured areas that form the points of a triangle. This is where the skull form of the boss first appears. The other forms are small whirlwinds, which you should avoid by running around the perimeter shadows – attacking the eyes reveals the monster in its only vulnerable state; and a large whirlwind which tracks you but is slow moving. You can also reveal the monster randomly by attacking the rough human forms of sand which periodi-

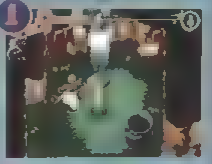


9. SOUND SPIRIT

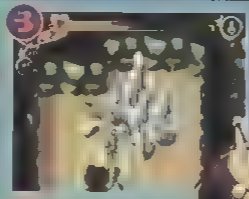
With your sound spirit destroy the crystals in the ante chamber. Using the super microwave attack (double A button, wi take out a the crysta s within an area and is an economica use of magic energy. The gold crystal will shatter if you hold the A button for an extra large burst. This cre ates a warp that leads you out the sound shrine. Return to the town, which has been attacked. Heal the elder, who w ll offer you his sword of Ordan (long sword level 2). Go to Myra n the elder s hut. Leave the town and trav el through the Earth shr ne area to the furthest hole to the left, which drops you before the crysta blocking the entrance to the Shrine of Darkness (1, below).

10. SHRINE OF DARKNESS

Walk down the steps of the Shrine and use a bomb to flick the raised switch. Return up the steps and along the right hand ledge and through the doorway. Jump across to the north, then right to find a key. Go north again and push the rock off the platform onto the stone marker (2). Cross the bridge and walk south to find an aquamarine. Return to the first room and jump left across the gap to find a door. The next room contains another rock to be pushed down. Walk north and uncover a key in the crystals (3). An adjoining room contains the earth scroll, which works with the long sword. Return to the room with the moving platforms, which you shou d now be able to cross. The bush conta ns a scroll energy that powers your sword so you may destroy stone pillars. Follow the corridor



round and down one level to find another scroll. Go back and destroy the four large pillars blocking the way to the next level. In the open area here, open all the chests on top of the pillars (4).



The next room is a mini ambush (nae problem!) and then proceed along the narrow area in the foreground (5). There's a chest with a key. Use the key on the wooden door. There's an easy-to-tackle monster behind it, guarding a ruby and another key. Walk onto the bridge and keep going. You'll find a diamond. Walk back to the bridge and take the platform to the mound of soldiers. Retrieve the knife and another key. The room to the north involves a trap. Take Efreet into the room and onto the raised area with the iron ball and switch. Roll the ball onto the switch to create a bridge, then fire Efreet at the torch holder to unleash an enemy (7). Once destroyed the way ahead opens, but another enemy awaits. Power the sword and destroy the pillars still in this room for an elixir. Now proceed east.

This is a complex two-tiered chamber. On the lower chamber you want to set off all the lifts (8) and on the higher chamber you want to light the two torches in the centre which starts lifts which take you to the far left (9). Also light this torch to create a short cut to the entrance of this room. You will probably need to go out and charge the earth scroll again as its needed in the final room in this area - to the south. Reach it by jumping down the small hole on the far left. Use your sword to break a small stone (10) which opens the way to a platform with another small stone - this activates the lift that brings you to a key (at last!).

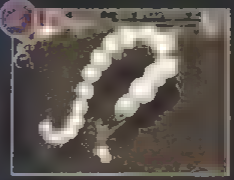
Cross the narrow gap on the moving platform and then uncover a blue orb under a tree. Summon Efreet. There are lots of undead in this area. In the next room walk to the far right and melt the ice before destroying any trees (11). Summon Dytto and use her bubbles to weaken the fire dragon. Walk to the far right and enter the tiled room. Summon Brass using the doors and use his sound wave attack to weaken the big jellyfish for a scroll. Go past the iron ball to the room with two robots (12). The aim is to hit the bulb with the left one.

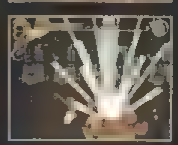
Reposition the left one facing left, hit the left switch then hit the robot to face down. Reposition the robot to face left. Now position the right robot to face down. Hit the right switch and hit the robot to face left so as to intercept the left robot. Sounds very confusing, but the principle is simple. Armed with another key, move to the next level.

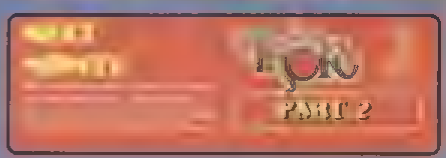
Down here, the sparks can be temporarily neutralised by a microwave attack. You'll encounter a robot. Don't worry, it only activates a puppet who tells you when the monster growls, strike its tail! Get yourself prepared for a big encounter. First, the dragons in the ante chamber are easy to dispose of - just stand your ground in the doorway.

II. DARKNESS BOSS

This starts life as an egg (1), and only walking round killing its attendant ghosts seems to wake it. Once alive, it's a monstrous worm (2). As the puppet advises, the best time to strike is when the creature howls at you, as it's stationary, but hold back until the head actually goes for you, as it tracks you. Patience is required as the tail moves around. If it's on the ground, you will have to crouch to hit it. Don't go running attacks with the large sword, as the chance of fatal contact is too risky.







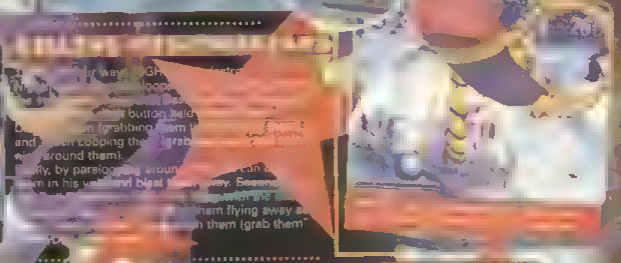
By now every self respecting Saturn owner will have got himself (or herself) a copy of NiGHTS and a sexy black analogue pad to play it on. You'll probably already be practising hard to notch up a brilliant high score for the great EMAP Score Attack CheHenge. Not wishing to see our readers come last in the mag ladder, here are some useful tips to give you the edge.

NiGHTY NiGHTS

It's a good idea to take some time out first to master the control of NiGHTS. Here are a few pointers.

THE L AND R

The L and R buttons can be used for more than just making NiGHTS perform stunts. They actually enable him to make 90 degree turns and sharp manoeuvres that are otherwise impossible. Plus, with practice, they can also allow him to perform larger paraloops.



We can take the principal of passing items during twin one step further. We know that 'dragging' items allows NiGHTS to keep a link going across a large gap, but what about while he's actually looping the items in the first place? Well, you may have noticed that most clusters of stars or chips appear in a circular formation. Trying to allow NiGHTS to collect the OUTSIDE item of a cluster while he loops the inside ones which will then be dragged after him. With practise you can even use this technique on three chips or stars.

NiGHTS ... Dreams ...

Getting Multi Grades

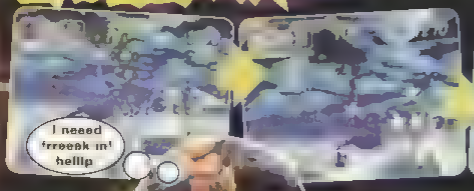
Unless you're looking to develop a particular level's A-Life (which we'll deal with next month), your aim when starting a new go in NiGHTS is simply to score as many points as possible! And don't worry if you're still struggling to achieve a C grade: the grade for each course is directly related to the score.

Checkpoint: Free The Ideya

... the level has ... lose the course's Ideya gem from ... quickly as possible. This is because A) ... destroying the claw quickly (120 ... to free the gem multiplied by 100), and ... DOUBLED once the gem is in your pos... collect ... chips and head straight for the claw.

Checkpoint: Bonus Time

Despite the name, Bonus Time is where the ... the gems in ... played. Once you've destroyed the claw and ... Ideya, your only ... aim is to zoom around the course as many times ... possible scoring ... as many points as you can in the allotted time! Here's a run down ... on the things NiGHTS can do to score points.



Chips

Chips ... collect ... Finish ... course ... Remember ... Second ... returns to his temp... of each course you are ... for every gold chip you have ... 90 chips (the maximum you can collect) scores you 4950 points.

Links

You may have noticed that sometimes a Plan opens ... above NiGHTS' temple holding a board with a number on it. This is the total number of Stars that ... has collected on that dream, and by flying into the ... on the last course (course four) you can ... your ... 10 points.

CHECKPOINT THRILL: THE BOSSES

A good performance against the boss (or Nightmaren) is absolutely critical to achieving a record breaking score. When you beat a boss you are awarded a score multiplier directly related to the amount of time taken, anything from X1.0 (the worst) to X2.0 (the best). In order to get X2.0 you've got to defeat the boss in record time - normally [illegible] seconds. Also, although it's possible to select the [illegible] NIGHTMAREN RA[illegible] OFF option in the [illegible] mode, masters will always [illegible] with the RANDOM setting ON.

X2.0 MULTIPLIER: 110 seconds

There are two ways to kill Gillwing. The first (and slowest) is to repeatedly grab his head and touch-dash it. The second (and fastest) is to paraloop his body. By performing a large tear-shaped paraloop that encompasses both his head and tail it is possible to destroy Gillwing in one GO! A guaranteed X2.0 multiplier.

X2.0 MULTIPLIER: 95 seconds

[illegible] power for the [illegible] spin is used [illegible] the right angle at which to fire [illegible] through the next available section. Be careful not to grab her [illegible] she has just rebounded off a wall or you'll incur the dreaded 5 second penalty. You can't afford to make one mistake if you want the X2.0 multiplier.

X2.0 MULTIPLIER: 105 seconds

An easy boss, but one that is surprisingly hard to do [illegible] trick is in being able to tell which winged bumper will propel you through the squadome at the right level to hit Gulpo. Picking the right height is easy (there's only three), but judging the angle is more difficult. Often it pays to travel left around the squadome as well as right.

X2.0 MULTIPLIER: 100 seconds

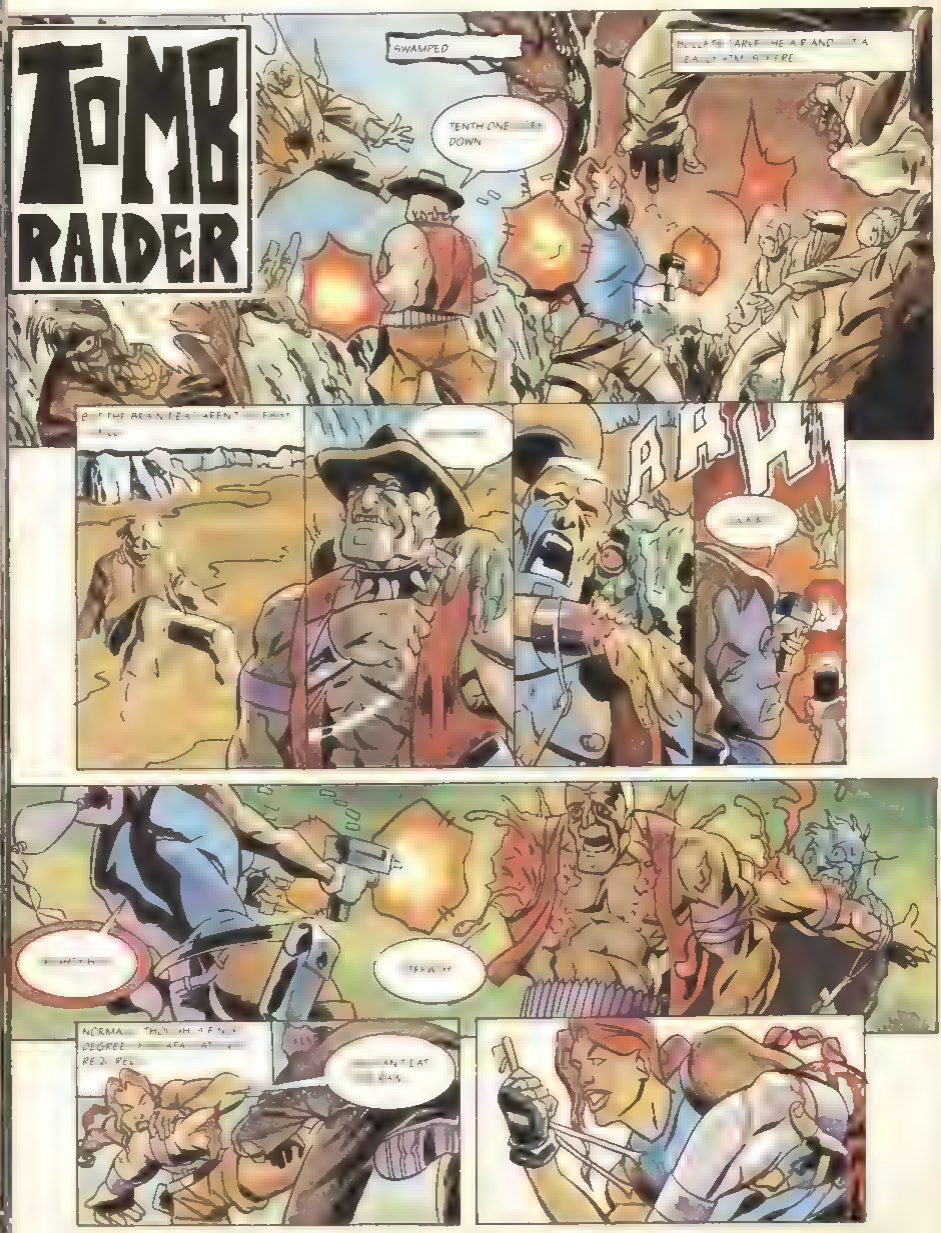
We still haven't found a good way [illegible] yet, so if [illegible] one of ours – but [illegible] something that does occasionally work is to use the mica to propel [illegible] Co[illegible] lucky, and [illegible] he stops to lig[illegible]

X2.0 MULTIPLIER: 100 seconds

[illegible] only the quickest boss in the game, [illegible] only have to hit him three times. Watch as he approaches and time a paraloop so that he flies [illegible] reach you (this takes a bit of practice). [illegible] more times and voil[illegible]

[illegible] is a tricky boss initially, but [illegible] the hang[illegible] and adopt a [illegible] dodge his multi-coloured throwing [illegible] side. When, once you grab [illegible] touch dash him and keep an eye [illegible] which direction his coat goes. [illegible] you can stay between him and [illegible] you can defeat him in [illegible] time.

TOMB RAIDER



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CONTINUE: PASSWORD

SKILL LEVEL: 1

RESPONSIVENESS: PRETTY LOVELY

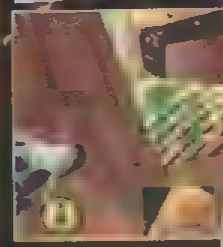
An all-new game from those jolly Derbyshire demons.

Blast the heck out of everything. Subtle puzzle brains. Possess a cat. Spanish detective. The usual.

SECOND LEVEL

Time was when you knew what you were doing with a game just by the title. Games like Paperboy, or Burger Time, or Don't Pull spanned out pretty clearly. You delivered papers, made burgers, or protect. Nowadays the [illegible] ironically liberal games producers on the scene, [illegible] use are right out the window. No, now we get dumpster names like Sabrewulf, which sounds like something by Damien Hirst. Why can't these so-called games programmers go back to calling their software things like "Worldwide Soccer '97"?

Anyway, all rhetoric. What the heart of Blam! Machinehead is about is this bloke called the Machinehead, who has inadvertently made himself a cyborg and destroyed practically the whole [illegible]. You must fire a big nuclear missile at him and blast the [illegible] everyone. Now what's that got to do with the title exactly?



BLA

machi

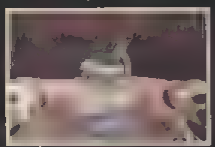
GATHER ROUND, CHILDREN...

The story of Blam! is pretty complex. Basically the Machinehead bloke has infected the whole world with a self-replicating nanotechnology virus. You're Kimmy Stride, one of a team of scientists who've developed a vehicle kitted with a nuke (the Vorpal Blade) to destroy MH, but your perverse assistant Orville has strapped you to the bomb and demands you navigate it personally to the Machinehead!

ORIENTEERING CAN BE FUN
Maps in Blam!, are for young sexy people who'd like to stay that way. As well as objectives, they highlight enemies, and their bases. Keep an eye on the cartography if you want to get anywhere.
AM!
inehead
BLAM!
FAT THAT MOTHER #!$'ER!
UNREALITY BITES
Because the planet is now in the grip of a nano virus, things are a little squiffy. Thus the shape of the world is now subject to laws of Unreality. For example, a mountain which blocks your way can be removed by finding an Unreality key that corresponds to a numbered Unreality station. With both combined the mountain is removed. These keys are very well protected, for your inconvenience.

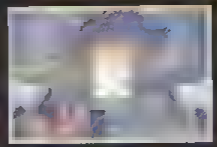
WITH THEIR TANKS

With a prefix like Blam! it's no surprise that this game is absolutely crammed with heavy weapons. You start with Chain Gun and missiles. Pick up extra pol-lies on the way.

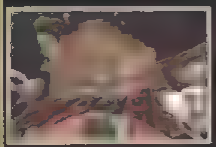


HOMING MISSILES Like missiles, but with added Lock-On.

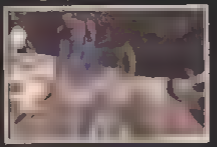
FLAME THROWER Crap range, but great destructive potential over grouped foes



DISRUPTOR A rapid-fire laser gun. Elusive, but killer usage.



LOB A grenade launcher which [illegible]



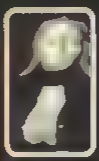
DESTRUKTINOK We made the name up. Knocks just about anything [illegible].

ION STORM The smart bomb to end 'em all. Kicks off a lengthy nuclear storm.

REALITY BITES AS WELL

Along with the Unreality, there are also Reality Keys. Far from making the real unreal, they're quite boring. In fact, instead of Reality Keys, they could quite easily just be called Keys, because all they ever do is open doors. Still, they're essential to your progress and shouldn't be mocked.

COMMENT



RAD

Machinehead certainly wins a prize for its groovy name, and probably scoops the Gratuitous Sexism of the Year award as well for its heroine. Whilst Machinehead is definitely playable (once you've gotten used to the tricky controls), the format is similar to Core's Thunderhawk and Shellshock. However, Blam! is superbly executed. The graphics move smoothly, the enemies look absolutely ACE and there's enough to keep both trigger finger and brain active. Not an earth-shattering idea, maybe, but totally enjoyable and the story is cool too

COMMENT

GUS

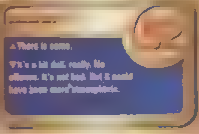
In a time when most games have the consistency of spam, Core are still providing large wads of British beef for hardcore gamers. Blam will be lapped up by shoot 'em up fans, who will appreciate the challenge. It also looks excellent in motion: super-smooth. The control method is very tricky, but sophisticated and responsive once you've served an apprenticeship. Although the game idea veers towards the familiar, Blam does seem to offer something new. Much better than Shellshock, it should be said. And I LOVE the music.

+ A lot of work has gone into designing the monsters.

- The backgrounds are pretty boring.

+ Some monsters have some shockingly realistic movement going – especially the spiders.

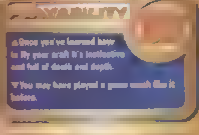
- Some monsters hardly move at all.



+ There is some.

- It's a bit dull, really. No alliums. It's not bad, but it could have been more atmospheric.

+ Loads and loads of big bangs, along with different death cries for every foe.

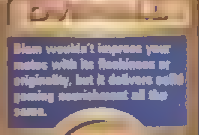


+ Once you've learned how to fly your craft it's instinctive and full of depth and depth.

- You may have played a game much like it before.

+ Loads and loads of missions, which get very hard indeed. Passwords look harmless.

- Don't know if you'd return once it's finished.



Blam wouldn't impress your mates with its flashiness or originality, but it delivers solid gaming nourishment all the same.

89

Little Johnny was enjoying the sedate pace of his new lift to school, when...

BY

RELEASE

PRICE
TBA

GAME TYPE

1
PLAYERS

24
MEG

BREAK DOWN

ORIGINALITY

CHALLENGE

ACTION

STRATEGY

REFLEXES

OPTIONS

CONTROL JUNKIE

GAME DIFFICULTY EASY

CONTINUES UNLIMITED

PASSWORDS

1

RESPONSIVENESS PERFECT!

ORIGIN

The latest in the SONIC series sees Travellers Tales take the spiky blue hedgehog into the third dimension.

GAME AIM

Destroy the badniks, rescue the flickies and deposit them in the giant gold rings.

BEAT THIS

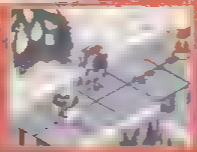
O!! Megadrive owner! Yeah YOU! Are you tired of hearing that your system is dead? Tired of reading last Sega are no longer supporting the 16 bit format? Tired of the lack of decent new software available for your machine? Well QUIT WHINING and COP A LOAD OF THIS. Sega may have just the answer to your prayers...

What do all of the Sonic games have in common? Apart from the fact that Sonic's in them, I mean? Give up? They're all flinkin' ace aren't they! Particularly Sonic CD on the Mega-CD which is still an MMS favourite. So when Sega announced that they were producing a new Sonic game, we all sat up and took notice. Especially when we heard that this particular Sonic game would be on the humble Megadrive and in 3D! After the recent shock announcement that Sonic X-Treme (set to be Sonic's first Saturn outing) was KILLED in mid-development, all eyes are now on Sonic 3D to see in which direction Sega wish to take the Sonic series. Licensing out the franchise to Travellers Tales (responsible for the amazing Toy Story) is a bold move, but has it payed off?

PULL THE BIRDS!

While the structure of Sonic 3D remains much the same as in previous Sonic games (each zone has two stages followed by a boss) the game objective has changed significantly. [illegible] birds which he needs to open the mega exit. These birds are hidden [illegible] and only by successfully Spin Dashing them can Sonic free the fluffy [illegible]

birds



CONSOLE CAPERS

Making a return to the world of Sonic are the now familiar power up consoles, dotted about the landscape. These bonuses are now even more crucial to Sonic's success than ever before so he is a run down on what to look out for.

SPEED SHOES

Upgrade your shoes for these super speedy, custom red turbo-sneakers.

INVINCIBILITY

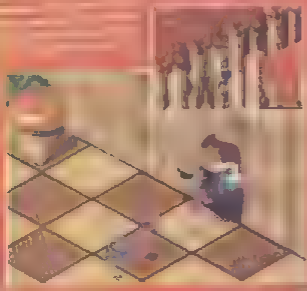
Gives Sonic 10 rings and makes him temporarily invincible. Useful for hitting tough dog meat robots and to reach the special stage.

SONIC SHIELD

Gives Sonic a transparent shield which protects him for one hit. Orange shield for Sonic Man classic, while Red shield protects Sonic from fire.

SONIC BOOM!

One of the Sonic ... been its simple one button ... Sonic could only move left and right, ... isometric ...



COMMENT

DAN

For once I'm speechless. I must admit I was a bit sceptical at the idea of Sonic's first 3D outing appearing on the humble Megadrive, but once again Sega have proved my worries groundless. Sonic 3D is a legitimate addition to the Sonic series, and a smart game in its own right. Yes, the change of game style may deter some Sonic purists, but in my opinion it's about time someone added some depth to Sonic's simplistic 'race to the end of the level' structure. The rendered graphics are fantastic (and not at all inappropriate), the music is surprisingly good and the gameplay is rich and rewarding. Travellers Tales have got the control and inertia of Sonic over the 3D terrain absolutely perfect, and are to be commended. In fact the only sign of rain on this parade is the game's difficulty level: it may be a tad too easy for experienced gamers. Still, I said it with Toy Story and I'll say it again – along as games of this quality keep coming out for the Megadrive, 16-bit WILL NOT DIE!

A BRIDGE TOO FAR!

Like all Sonic games before it, Sonic 3D features an incredible 3D special stage just waiting to be discovered. By collecting 50 rings and locating one of Sonic's hidden pals (Tails and Knuckles) Sonic is warped to a special stage where he must cross a narrow bridge, dodging spikes and collecting rings in order to reach the Chaos Emerald at the other end. There are eight emeralds to collect and the stages vary slightly between Tails and Knuckles.

COMMENT

GUS

Travellers Tales seem to be re-educating the world about the Megadrive single-handedly. Sonic 3D's graphics are a gob-smacking marriage of speed and detail. The game is a total departure from the Sonic series — which some people have been demanding for ages. I don't think it has quite the same instant appeal, but you can't complain about Deja Vu. There's massive depth, the game idea is cool (only the bonus level lets it down a bit) But what Dan says about the difficulty level is true, this is probably even easier than Sonic 1!

GRAPHICS 93

... rendered ... Sonic ... and dimensions ... backgrounds floor is ...

ANIMATION 93

... sprites ... animations ... as the ... Donkey Kong Country ... count out!

MUSIC 92

... for ... with ... the present ...

EFFECTS 90

... complete the ... programmers ... ... the same advance as ...

PLAYABILITY 91

... and ... Sonic is per- ... the whole experience, flatters him.

LASTABILITY 90

... levels, and ... ... to think about. ... a tad easy for ... gamers.

OVERALL

... that, from inside the ... coffin? Is that ... ? My God, it's still ... got it out! Get it ...

92

BLAM!...

See! through the eyes of Dr Kimberly Stride as you ride the Vanpal Blade through an insane combination of shoot-em-up action, strategic objectives and B-movie melodrama. **Gasp!** with amazement at state-of-the-art virtual landscapes, tunnel systems and eye-popping FMV. **Laugh!** in the face of danger as you blast through fifteen adrenaline-pumping stages of sheer 3D exhilaration. **Scream!** with terror at horrific hordes of mutated polygonal enemies. **Beg!** for mercy as you face the Machinehead in the mother of all showdowns... **Play!** Blam!-Machinehead! for the ride of your life.

EIDOS

CORE

SEGA (AM2)

NOVEMBER

£49.99

BEAT 'EM UP

1-2

CONTROL: JOYPAD

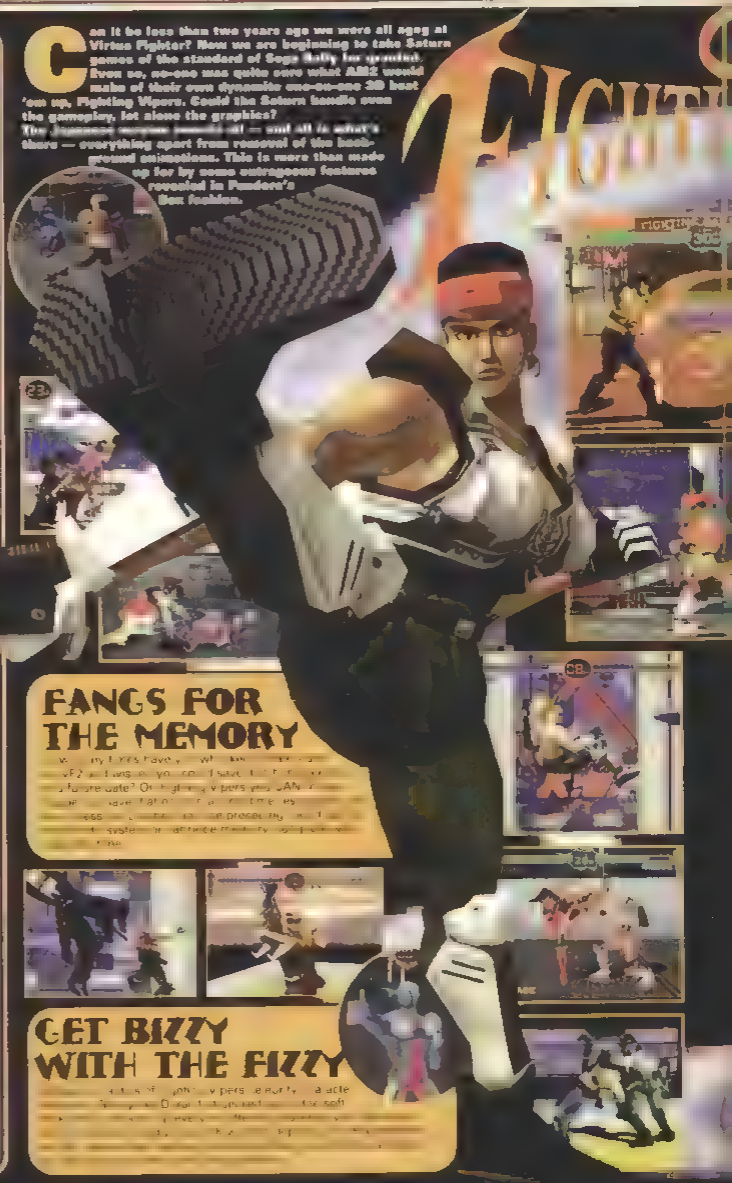
SKILL LEVELS: 8

AM2 convert their own Sega Model 2 coin-op. Itself an overhaul of the VF2 principle.

Defeat, say demolish, your nine other opponents in a visceral bout.

Can it be less than two years ago we were all agog at Virtua Fighter? Now we are beginning to take Saturn games of the standard of Sega Rally for granted. Even so, no-one was quite sure what AM2 would make of their own dynamite one-on-one 3D beat 'em up, Fighting Vipers. Could the Saturn handle even the gameplay, let alone the graphics?

The Diamond engine would of — and all is what's there — everything apart from removal of the back-ground animations. This is more than made up for by some outrageous features revealed in Fandom's Sex fashion.



FANGS FOR THE MEMORY

GET BIZZY WITH THE FIZZY

VIPERS

SNAKEBITE

A detailed [illegible] reviews [illegible] of Fighting Vipers's wild [illegible] Hyper [illegible] revealed after your first completion [illegible] Hyper mode you can strip [illegible] your arm out quickly and go into custom [illegible] mode. There's now no limit to the [illegible] moves you can string into [illegible] you release a fundus battery [illegible] like 3-D style. Hyper mode [illegible] a couple of pace and style

RATTLE AND HUM

The Training Mode is a comprehensive Practice [illegible] computer drones who stand [illegible] move [illegible] according to [illegible] of eight types. A moves [illegible] moves available [illegible] structures on how [illegible] perform [illegible] A move is marked off once [illegible]

ONCE BITTEN

[illegible]

COMMENT

DAN

[illegible]

COMMENT

GUS

[illegible]

- [illegible] accuracy with the [illegible] movements really.
- The characters are lower resolution than VF2 but look better. Amazing [illegible].
- The environment is so incredibly detailed, you take it for granted until you see one of Sarah's throws or a close-up replay.
- Akira's slippy sweat really is classic, as is Bruce's chest [illegible].
- The rock shit [illegible] game is pretty [illegible].
- Loads of grunting and groaning and the deafening sound of vomiting stool.
- Really heavy stress-busting impact [illegible].
- More violent and more [illegible] attractive than VF2.
- The incredible speed is mixed with smart, sophisticated combat gameplay.
- A huge array of extras. Playback, hidden characters and costumes, time records and stacked opponents.

GAME

It could be a huge struggle to knock out which is best, Virtua Fighter, Another AM2 game influence into history.

95

A few, fortunate games build their reputations on gameplay alone.

SATU BOMBE

COMMENT

GUS

All that's strong and all that's weak about Bomberman is contained herein. Short of attempting some kind of 3D debacle, you can't really expect Hudsonsoft to do much more with the concept. The reason to buy Bomberman is the multiplayer mode. Two player is okay, get above that and its excellent stuff that you'll come back to time and again because it's easy to set up and play for 10 minutes or an hour. The single player game is not nearly so compulsive, but the version here is as varied as possible. Even the infinite continues don't spoil a very challenging lone mode.

URN ERMAN

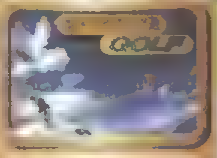
COMMENT

DAN

Bomberman is, was, and always will be a multiplayer game. No matter how much effort Hudsonsoft put into the one player 'quest' mode, it will always be seen as a distraction from the real deal: Tournament Mode! Four player Bomberman is an essential experience for anyone with an interest in games, and provided you have four pads, a multitap and four mates its a brilliant way to spend an evening. 10 player Bomberman is even more hectic, though I doubt that most of you will have the resources. If you're going to make the most of the multiplayer option, then Saturn Bomberman is an essential purchase

The best version of Bomberman there has ever been. That can't be a bad thing.

85



SEGA

OCTOBER

£44.99

GOLF SIM

CONTROL: JOYPAD

GAME DIFFICULTY: ADJUSTABLE

CONTINUES: RAIN CHECK

SKILL LEVELS: 2

RESPONSIVENESS: TIME

A new golf game engine, eventually part of Sega's 'Arena' sports series.

Same as any golf game. Knock a ball from tee to hole in as few strokes as possible.

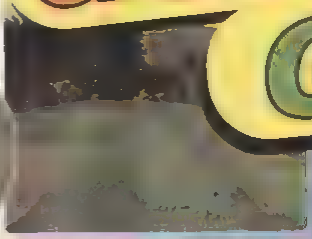
7TH (TRACK 1, NORMAL SETTING)

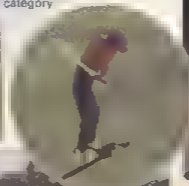
Few games offer an equal chance for humiliation as golf. While your partners might drive effortlessly, chip confidently and putt with devastating accuracy, you might hook and slice your way to bogeys of Bart Simpson proportions.

Still, millions of console owners who wouldn't be seen dead with a copy of Fighting Vipers (and thousands who would) queue up to buy the latest attempt to render the ancient game in digital form. Despite many of them looking much of a muchness and having suspiciously similar control methods, some pitch closer to the flag than others. Actua Golf falls into this category.

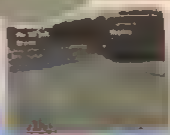
actu

G



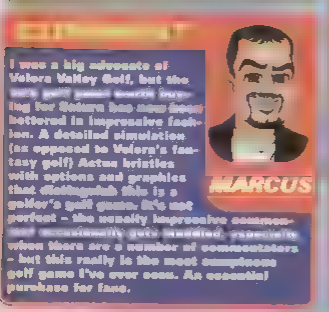


ARC-I-OLOGY



EYE BALLED

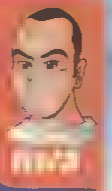
ua GOLF



MARCUS

I was a big advocate of Victory Valley Golf, but the new golf games worth buying for Saturn has since been bettered in impressive fashion. A detailed simulation (as opposed to Victory's fantasy golf) Actua bristles with options and graphics that distinguish this is a golfer's golf game. It's not perfect – the usually impressive commentary occasionally gets mumbled, especially when there are a number of commentators – but this really is the most complete golf game I've ever seen. An essential purchase for fans.

Games consistently improve, and sometime somewhere will happen on this, but Actua Golf is without doubt the best golf game on the Saturn, and by some margin. Finally, programmers who show some real interest in the game with their work, which seems to be assembled from a golfer's mind. The basic control method – click a power bar twice – is the same as every other, but the flexibility in setting up your shot with the minimal resource to mouse, makes it easy and painless to perform skips onto the green, or draw the ball effortlessly. Because you can do this easily, you're more likely to bother, unlike most other golf games. The excellent visuals and commentary all add, of course, and again, these have no peer on Saturn. Two courses is not ideal for our greedy gamestore here, but there may be follow-up courses close. In the meantime, golf gamers should not hesitate to buy Actua.



GRAPHICS 95

- Detailed, lush courses that are a pleasure to play on and, a sensible and wide range of perspectives.
- Occasional glowing of very close landscape features.

SOUND 87

- The rousing opening album gives good and appropriately sports-theme views of your shots. The golfer's commentary is also very good.

PLAYABILITY 91

- Very little music apart from a bizarre elevator ditty on the title screen.

LASTABILITY 90

- Not one but three championships, the best being from Pebble Hills. You can also ride there for a momentary overlook.
- The swing and 'attack' and attitude of the ball sounds not out so bad.

VALUE 95

- Easier to play, with more depth and subtlety than any other golf game, and more interesting courses.

OVERALL 93

- The professional mode pushes players again once they've developed their confidence in Amateur status.
- 36 holes is probably 18 too few.

OVERALL

Actua outdrives everything on the Saturn range. The leader in its field.

92

SEGA

NOVEMBER

£44.99

FOOTIE!

CONTROL
JOYPAD

GAME
DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM

CONTINUE
RAM SAVE

SKILL LEVELS
3

RESPONSIVENESS
SKILL!

Nominally an update of Victory Goal, but in an entirely different league.

Score goals in realtime, but with more sophisticated elements like team coaching.

FINISH THE GAME!

The Japanese hate to be second best at anything, and their 'knob' status at all things football is clearly one they would like to change. And it is changing. Top signings for the J-League, including 'smiling' Gary Lineker and a recent shock victory over Brazil at the Olympics go some way to establishing them as the top nation in Asia.

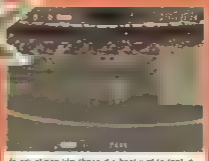
In soccer games we've been another area of doubt. Smashing we've rested on the laurels of Victory Goal. But with Worldwide Soccer '97, Sega have snuck up on [illegible] replacement English defence

worldwide soccer

ide '97 er 97

Magnificent reaction save there from the Scotland goalie. Must be all the practice he ...

SHEAR BRILLIANCE



In situations like these it's best just to tank it.

Coulthard applies her highly developed ducking and diving skills honed at MMS.

At half time the crowd are ent... exhibition of celebrity break dancing.

If Gary Bloom says 'he's making some specs ...mentioned' once more, I'm gonna ...

GRAPHICS 93

...impressive backdrops with flags of the competing nations enhanced in the crowd. Sensible, playable camera positions.

SOUND 93

...like real people lines ever before. Detail and drama with every exertion.

TUNES 72

▲ Follows the current vogue for cheesy mass music.
▼The music in-game aids very little.

SPEECH 91

▲ The commentary by Gary Bloom has a good stab at analysing the action.
▼Too much repetition of phrases to make it work completely.

PLAYABILITY 94

▲ Incredibly easy to pick up and begin playing. As much fun in one-player as with 2, 3 or 4. It has the elusive 'feel' footie sports fans know about.

LASTABILITY 93

▲ The range of functions, 'special moves' and tactical elements is a pukka way of maintaining appeal. Good tournament difficulty structure.

OVERALL

Strength and beauty combine in the best football game you're likely to see before the end of this season.

93

VERDICT

Almost everyone who has played Worldwide Soccer has been blown away by it. Rarely do sports games get the sort of seal of approval it has achieved as everyone has a different idea of what's the most important aspect of a sports. Worldwide offers complete fullbacks and outstanding playability in equal measure. The pace, tension and pressure of the game are just right, with enough space on the field to play a tactical game. It's also the most enjoyable Saturn soccer game to play alone, with smart but fallible CPU sides. You really must buy this title, even if you have every other football game known to man.

RECOMMENT

With Worldwide Soccer 97 Sega set out to create the definitive Soccer title and guess what? That's just what they've done. SWS 97 is a revelation in sports simulations, particularly balancing entertainment realness with intuitive gameplay. It looks like nothing you've ever seen before, plays like nothing you've ever played before, and offers more depth than a dozen Fifa's. This is, without a doubt, the finest footie game I've ever played, and that includes Sensible Soccer and Adidas Power Soccer. The proof of the pudding is in the eating and SWS 97 has football pie all over its shirt. Goaaal!

Disney Pinocchio

RELEASE: ..... OCTOBER
PLAYERS: 1
BY: ..... SEGA

MEG: 24
PRICE: ..... TBA
GAME TYPE: ... PLATFORM

GRAPHICS 82	The characters look great, but the backgrounds are sometimes a bit bland.
ERRECTS 75	Nothing to speak of – but it's not that kind of game.
ANIMATION 84	Pinocchio and Jiminy bounce around the screen in impressive detail.
PLAYABILITY 83	Fun, but slightly slow moving.
MUSIC 77	Grating versions of the songs from the film.
LASTABILITY 79	This won't present much of a challenge to seasoned gamers.

OVERALL 82

A modest platformer with only a few nice touches – fun for fans.

e's the little wooden guy with the floppy quiff. His dad's the elderly toymaker and his best mate is a talking grasshopper. Yup, it's Pinocchio and it's Disney time on the Megadrive again.

n this new slab of celluloid-inspired platform fun our wooden hero s adventures closely follow the plot of the film. Which, incredibly, no-one round here seems to have seen. But he goes to school, has some terrible water fun, visits the funfair and gets swallowed by a wha e. A sounds fairly plausible to us. Each level is linked by a story book detailing Pinocchio s adventures as he runs away from home and tries to avoid getting shredded into match wood by various ne erdow ells. Altogether now. "When you wish upon a star makes no differance who you are."

COMMENT

Yes, we've seen it all before, yes, it's unbearably cute, no, there's absolutely no opportunity to machine gun anything whatsoever. Right, now we've got all that out of the way, what's Pinocchio actually like? It looks very bright and tidy, and the principal characters are faithful and cheeky representations of their screen counterparts. The game design varies from the innovative (the little dance sequences set in the theatre are very original, if a bit frustrating) to the over-familiar. The only people likely to find this appealing are exactly the audience it's aimed at – junior gamers who are fond of the film. They won't be disappointed.

COMMENT

I'm afraid I don't feel quite as forgiving towards Pinocchio as Marcus does. While it's hardly an offensive piece of software, I'm sick of seeing my favourite Disney movies turned into average platform romps. There are some nice touches, such as the game following the movie's plot, and being able to control Jiminy Cricket on one level, but I wouldn't have it in the house. While I can accept that this game is aimed at a younger audience, I can't really believe that anyone buying a new full price Megadrive game would choose this over Sonic 3D. Sorry.

As well as a mixed bag of game styles there are a couple of really unusual levels – one where you control Jiminy cricket and have to use your umbrella to swat marauding moths and another where Pinocchio is the star attraction in a little theatre. You can only progress to the next level by exactly copying the moves of your various partners, whether they're ballet dancers or wrestling Cossacks – succeed and you get a round of applause – fail and you get hit with tomatoes.

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RACING

CONTROL JOYPAD

GAME DIFFICULTY HARD

CONTINUES RAM SAVE

SKILL LEVELS 3

RESPONSIVENESS MEDIUM

One of the first PSX titles by Psygnosis converted by Sakura Wesnousse, Perfect Entertainment.

Take the line to steal car races, while beating the living daylights out of 19 opponent cars.

MM DIVISION 1

MM SEGA

Destruction Derby is the closest thing to a drive 'em up you are going to see on the Saturn this year. Racing your clapped-out saloon is almost incidental to forcing other cars into [illegible] Running the dirt tracks laid out in five vaguely American locations.

Saturn owners are [illegible]

DESTRUCTION DERBY

CROSS YOUR FINGER

[illegible] There's its [illegible] They [illegible] will traffic [illegible] ng from a right [illegible] sending [illegible] careering down the wrong path. Amazingly this [illegible]

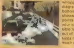
COMMENT

DAN

EDITED HIGHLIGHTS

PENALTY POINTS

Metal grinds against metal - the damage's permanent. Taking first place in a Destruction Derby race is only half of it. Another way to score points is to force other cars out of the race. Heavy impacts are rewarded with 'Race Points', with a minor nudge getting a couple of points and full 360 degree spins taking a whopping eight. A diagram in the bottom right shows damage points around your car. It's possible to get hauled out of the race for sustaining too much damage.



COMMENT

GUS

... Derby ... racers and ... make the ... must be very ... of fun ... The mo...

ROCKY ROAD JOHN

Not really a race but a fight to the death. The twenty cars have a massed motor rumble in a bowl arena, a Destruction Derby. The secret for high points and good placings is to spread the damage around your car and survive as long as possible.

PILE

...ing twenty cars onto this narrow is a recipe for gridlock ... pile-ups look great, but ... take you out of contention if you get stuck in the centre.

75

▲The cars are nice, and there's lots going on in any race.

▼Low resolution and blurry backgrounds.

▲Spectacular crashes occurring all the time.

▼Very unpolished 3D. Background features appear from nowhere.

77

▲Intriguing mix of ... and ... Selection stuff.

74

▲The characters' ... are funny.

▼The commentator is repetitive. No good ... action.

▲The destruction, ... element lends DD a distinctive and original appeal.

▼The courses are flat and simple.

▲The Derby is always good for a laugh.

▼Once you have the measure of the race, it's challenge and appeal wanes.

OVERALL

An immaculate conversion might have made this a contender. But with the company it keeps, it's just an also-ran.

69

REAL BOUT

RELEASE: ..... IMPORT
PLAYERS: 1-2
BY: ..... SNK

GAME TYPE: BEAT 'EM UP

GRAPHICS 82
High level of detail, but not the highest level of resolution.

SOUND 58
The samples sound crude.

PLAYABILITY 76
Nothing like the smoothness of Capcom's.

EXTENSION 75
Nothing to write home about, but plenty of moves.

ORIGINALITY 84
A pleasantly weird array of signature tunes varying between characters.

LASTABILITY 70
About as collectable as locomotive numbers.

OVERALL 73
Somebody will buy this whatever we say, so why say anything?

A small, but committed group of game fans keep the SNK arcade culture in society, whereas in Japan the company behind NEO GEO is taken rather more seriously.

SNK are something of a curiosity. While everyone and his processor have stampeded into 3D polygon games and new consoles, they keep churning out derivative beat 'em ups for an spellbound audience of King of Fighters, Art of Fighting, Fatal Fury and Samurai Shodown fans. However the respect with which they are held goes some way to explaining why Sega licensed them to convert these very games with an expensive ROM cart required as well as a CD.

Real Bout is an unreconstructed SNK game of the old school. Defenders would argue that a lot of the features that make their way into Capcom beat 'em ups are developed in SNK's games first. But what about Real Bout?

CART ON TOP

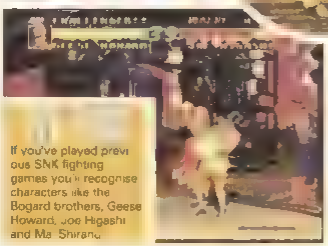
Real Bout is the second game SNK have produced which uses a cartridge with the CD. Unlike King of Fighter '95 which used ROM, this is a RAM cartridge that uploads further data from the disc. The initial outlay is high for this package, but you should be able to use the RAM

PLANE CRAZY

The fighting action takes place on three separate planes; background, mid and foreground. A separate button on the pad controls movement between the planes for dodging attacks. You can attack across planes with diagonal special moves.

KNOW NO BOUNDS

Taking the 'ring out' idea from 3D fighters, Real Bout allows you to push your opponent into an instant forfeiting out-of-bounds position. But there's normally something else in the way, so player's must propel their opponent through [illegible] with a flurry of special attacks.



If you've played previous SNK fighting games you'll recognise characters like the Bogard brothers, Geese Howard, Joe Higashi and Mai Shiranui.

COMMENT

MARCUS

For some people the Nineties just haven't happened. While Yu Suzuki and his mob have been working away on the virtual experience, the Real Bout team have come up with yet another 2-D beat 'em up. The feature, and is some ways the problem with SNK beat 'em ups is they don't have the same cool Nippon style of Capcom's Streetfighter series, or the guts of the Mortal Kombat games. They're something in between, and the features that Real Bout has which will appeal to the ultra-NEO GEO enthusiast will be lost on 90% of gameplayers.

COMMENT

GUS

I've no particular fetish for SNK games, and I don't think the vast majority of gamers do. At their best, they're well crafted beat 'em ups; at worst boring piles of crap. To my mind, this improves on the much overrated King of Fighters, whilst coming nowhere near the classiness of the recent Capcom games. You don't need Real Bout.

IMPACT RACING

It doesn't seem to be enough to push a car around a track any more – gamers demand the extra thrills of rally driving (Sega Rally), dig holes (Highway 2000) and the County Rangers (Need For Speed) to spice up their race regs.

Trash and carn down space. Full marks for originality at least. There's a

with the chance to soup up your

For a more [illegible] for Impact Quad Trains in the genre competition...

ROAD HAZARDS

[illegible] on each [illegible] other levels and [illegible] fast. If you destroy each course's target number of cars then you'll get a tunnel-bound bonus stage before you tackle the course. Destroy a certain number of [illegible] time limit and you'll be rewarded [illegible] trophy.

RELEASE:	NOVEMBER
PLAYERS:	1
BY:	JVC
PRICE:	£44
GAME TYPE:	DRIVING /SHOOT 'EM UP

[illegible]	87
Not as busy as other driving games, but a lot more imaginative	
[illegible]	88
The more exotic weapons are very impressive.	
[illegible]	85
Extremely smooth and fast.	
[illegible]	81
Great driving game, good shoot 'em up	
[illegible]	94
[illegible]	78
[illegible]	

OVERALL 80

A compelling mix of game genres. Impact Racing is a top notch novelty racer.

COMMENT

GUS

Marcus and I had to violently disagree on something before he left, and this is it. Why he holds a light up for Impact Racing is beyond me. If I want a racer I get Sega Rally, if I want a shoot 'em up, I get, well anything apart from Impact Racing. The graphics, granted, are pretty slinky, but the settings (her space) look like an A-road through the Pennines. Nevertheless, it appeals to some.

COMMENT

MARCUS

With success dependant on a combination of skilful driving and shooting accuracy, Impact Racing is a genuine multi-genre game that does pretty well on both scores. Impact Racing's graphics are fast and smooth – at least on a par with Need For Speed – but it usually achieves this with high-walled courses and cliff faces that limit the trackside detail. The short cuts don't register once you're into the game, although the limitations of the courses and the repetition in gameplay are slightly off-putting. Overall, this isn't in the premier league of racing games, but I've been having a lot of fun playing it.

Baseball bats aren't just useful for inflicting grievous bodily harm on innocent passers-by and for hiding behind pub bars ("Just in case of aggro, know what I mean?"). They're quite handy for America's favourite sport.

Baseball is basically rounders played by men wearing tight trousers and funny little hats. Two teams of nine do battle on a diamond-shaped pitch. The defending team pitches a ball at the opposing batter who launches it in a direction that is determined by where the ball lands. He runs from base to base, scoring a point for a complete circuit. He can be interrupted by watchful fielders, who can retrieve or catch the ball, knocking him out. That's basically it, and it's pants to be honest. That's why no one in this country plays it, why there are only a handful of US baseball games released here and why every time we review one of them we have to explain what baseball is

PLAYERS: ....
BY: ....

GRAPHICS 87

Stadiums fall apart a bit close-up but the players are very detailed.

EFFECTS 81

Options noises are good, but the in-game stuff could have been beefier.

82

Batting and running is very fluid, and personalised to each player

74

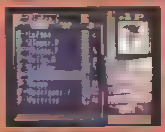
The horribly wheezy organ music is back.

83

There's a lot to get into here – it's worth exploring.

OVERALL 83

The best baseball game yet is flawed but fun.



PLAY BALL!

I'm probably not best qualified to review a baseball game – I've got absolutely no interest in the sport – but I was quite impressed with World Series II. While it offers few significant improvements over the first World Series game, its clearest advantage over Acclaim's Frank Thomas Big Hurt is in the graphics department – the players, in particular, look good. The same old baseball problems are apparent though – unlike most simulations of football or tennis, you still get the impression that success is perhaps too reliant on initiating a series of pre-determined routines that you have too little control over. Better is surely to come – in the meantime, World Series II wins the league.

Last year's World Series Baseball was the best attempt yet at bringing the sport to console. In the meantime, a couple of other contenders have arrived, but none have bettered Sega's game, until this, merely an update of Sega's game. I struggle to see any radical new elements, only graphic tweaks and stat changes (which will surely be missed by all but a few diehard baseball fans in this country). A game designed only to excite fans of a peculiar sport, but accomplished despite that.

3 DIRTY DWARVES

The Three Dirty Dwarves in question come from ... the role-playing game of four imaginative ... are being watched closely by Army ..., as one of them has developed an inter- ... dwarves into ... world' along with ore-ish mutants that threaten the st... United States from the ghettos of New ... are nabbed by the army ... have to ... Al's Sport Shop in the ... it in the silliest ... 'em up on the Satu... action. So...

RELEASE: JUNE
PLAYERS: 1
BY: US GOLD

MEG: 4
PRICE: TBA
GAME TYPE: DRIVING

82 — Pleasantly different chunky graphic style and large-scale sprites.

71 — The samples are not of a great quality.

74 — The dwarves move well and the background scaling is interesting.

? — The three character select system is unique, the action relentless.

75 — American, if that appeals to you.

? — Very hard, even with unlimited continues.

66 — ... gameplay and limited scope for player expression.

CHANGING DAYS

...screen stages ...

TOOLED UP

Each character's weapons ... employed in various ways during ... street-fight. The simplest method is ... bash enemies over the head with what you have to hand, but the weapons can be employed in more specialised ways.

BASEBALL BAT ... run-paced balls into the faces of your ... foes, and skilful players can launch ... salvo of four at once.

FOOTBALL Rolled along the ground to up-end anyone standing in your path, while ... pasing of most ... obstacles.

SHOTGUN ... an unlimited supply of cartridges, one of which is enough to blow most creatures away.

THREESOME The Dwarves go into action using ... special attack ... power, and turn into a ... formation.

CREAM TEAM

... follow, with the option to switch ... control of the main character. Two ... players share the duties, ... character selectable by ... Three players, naturally ...

COMMENT

... they all ...

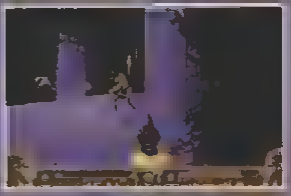
DAN

COMMENT

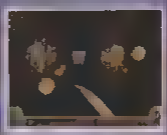
SEGA SATURN

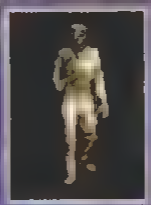
OUT NOW

EXHUMED
SEGA
£44.99
1 PLAYER
DOOM



Developed (perhaps not least the engine from the excellent PC game Dark Forces) for Exhumed – a sophisticated Doom clone set in Egypt. You are Lieutenant Singer, an archeologist exploring the tomb of Ramses, trying to prevent a demonic scheme to resurrect the body of King Ramses II. Exhumed has a couple of twists – the mechanics of the game are more advanced than competitors Doom and Alien Trilogy (you can look up and down, and sound effects are superb), and the game structure is also more in common with Dark Forces' level-based shoot 'em up. A control pad can be linked to a number of subsidiary hub levels which you can visit to pick up weapons and ammunition that may become useful as you ransack your tombs. The standard of Alien Trilogy's levels may prevent it from eclipsing Exhumed, but for 3-D system adventure, we have a winner.

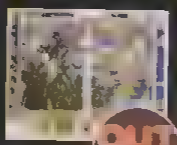




OVERALL 91%

The most sophisticated and impressive Doom-style game on the Saturn this year. An essential purchase.

BUST-A-MOVE 2
ACCLAIM
£39.99
1-2 PLAYERS
PUZZLE



OVERALL 92

If you only buy one puzzle game, make it Bust-A-Move 2. So addictive it's frightening.

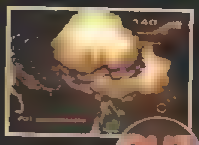
VIRTUA FIGHTER KIDS
SEGA
£29.99
1-2 PLAYERS
BEAT 'EM UP

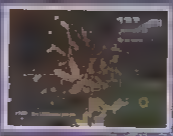
Virtua Fighter 2. If you have got the sequel, the kiddies might seem like a pale imitation. But without.

OVERALL 82

Bridges the gap until VF3, but some might be put off by the similarities to VF2 and the kitsch overload.

ALIEN TRILOGY
ACCLAIM
£44.99
1 PLAYER
DOOM



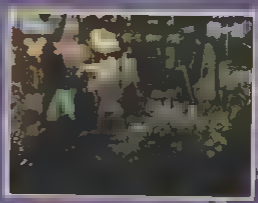


The Alien Trilogy is up against some pretty stiff competition from the forthcoming Heretic – but the game technically scales well...

OVERALL 88

While still impressive and atmospheric, Alien Trilogy is fast becoming outclassed.

KEIO FLYING SQUADRON 2
JVC
£44.99
1 PLAYER
PLATFORM



Keio Flying Squadron 2 has got some pretty weird graphics. Does your mum know you're playing this?

OVERALL 81

Junior gamers will go for Keio's colourful mix of game-styles and manga madness.

MEAN YOB

Can it really be six years since I started this lark? During that time I have read the sublime, the ridiculous, the misspelt tosh and all other shades in between. My identity has remained the most closely guarded secret in game lore. But from next month, I won't be answering all the letters. You now have a choice. If you want to make a serious point to all or any of the team, write to them at MEAN MAIL, MEAN MACHINES SEGA, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON, EC1R 3AU. If you want to have it out with me, write to YOB'S COLUMN at the same address.

[illegible]

Dear Yob,
The motivation for me writing this letter comes from an American TV documentary that I watched about the social impact of videogames. The programme interviewed psychologists, and people that play games. One psychologist said that the attraction of games is the fascination between death and resurrection because you play your Mortal Kombats and Street Fighters, kill people, have it done to you and yet you can put in

another pound, start a new game, and get your 'dead' character resurrected.
Playing a game is a very one on one affair, where you decide the outcome by reacting to the game's environment. This acts on your subconscious and tells you violence is acceptable, without you knowing. Apparently. At this point I was thinking these people have a point, although I did not agree with their views that violent games cause people to be violent. Video games are an ESCAPE. They are not real, not to be taken seriously, and why haven't Tom and Jerry been condemned for the violence that is in their cartoons.
I discussed this programme with my parents, who did not wholly agree with me on the programme, but agreed that videogame violence does de-sensitise real violence. They said that a lot of people can not differentiate between the violence in real life and the violence in games.
I had to get this off my chest, because it annoys me that people need something to blame for all the real life violence, and they choose games whose sole purpose is entertain.
Yours sincerely
Ben Tapp, Brighton
YOB People have been punching each other's lights out from the time they discovered they had fists. We might seem to live in a violent society, but ours is one of the safest in the world. Really nasty living conditions seem to go hand in hand with aspects like poverty, prejudice and religious intolerance, all of which are more threatening than even the most violent videogame. There's an opposite view of the argument that says violence is 'catharsis' that means by the process of getting it out your system in a make-believe way, you lose the urge to do it in real life. You might use Japan as evidence of that. Tokyo has hundreds of arcades, but is a relatively safe city.

[illegible]

Dear Yob
Samantha and Gemma my true loves
Skin sweeter than two doves
Kissing in the night with a soft candle light
We meet each other at half past six
Our love is like a ton of bricks
Your beautiful faces that everyone chases
Your [sic] sweeter than a chocolate cake
That was a poem to the girls Nancy Samantha and Gemma Widowson
From
Martin King, Central Notts
YOB What is this? It's not bloody I'm-Just-Seventeen and-It's-Bliss and all that poncey crap. I'm missing any referencing to games in your poem, and you're using my page as some sort of contact act for a threesome. Pervert.

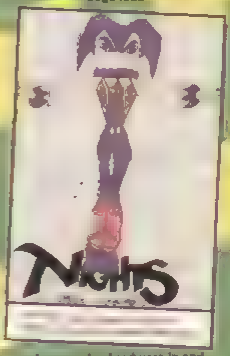
[illegible]

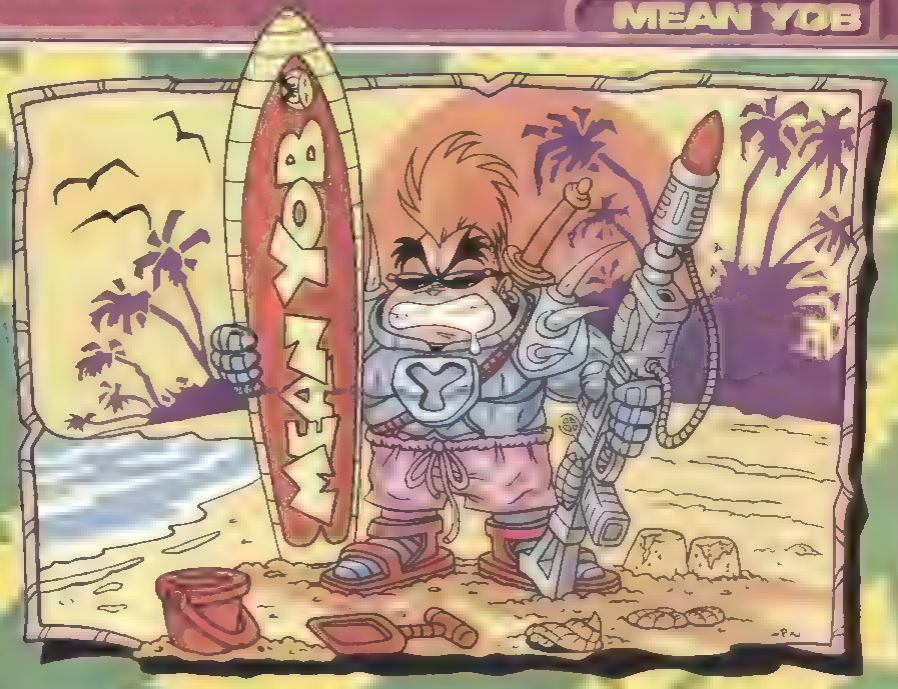
Dear Yob,
Why does everyone seem to think the Saturn is the same as the PlayStation? They are completely different. The Saturn has three processing chips, the PlayStation only one. Also the Saturn has better 2D powers. My brother owns a Saturn and keeps his friends serious with X Men and will make them cry because he gets UMK3.
Now Squaresoft have four [illegible] several DSP's that Sega never said anything about, which means we haven't seen half of what the Saturn can do. So the Saturn is more powerful than the PlayStation. Comparing the Saturn to the PlayStation is like comparing the Spectrum to the STE, Active C64. Also, what happened to your Batman Forever review on the Game Gear?

Ray Burt, Devon
YOB Does everyone think that? I couldn't give a toss about the average opinion of a Playstation owner. I wouldn't get that excited about the Squaresoft thing. It was just a rumour, and I hardly think Sega lobbed that much expensive hardware in and then 'forgot' about it. Batman Forever? We were going to review it, but then somebody needed something to prop open the office window with. Believe me, it's much more useful for that.

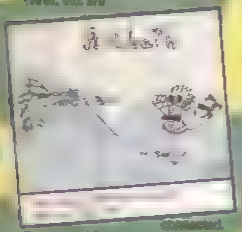
[illegible]

Dear Yob,
I've been a big fan of your mag for ages now and have written to you





with no reply, [illegible] Yet I forgive you for this [illegible] have a [illegible] for my [illegible] Every [illegible] and [illegible] a game the [illegible] Sega Saturn [illegible] poker, with many [illegible] upon it. Then it cuts [illegible] which you play music. Do [illegible] you can't load the game. I'm not dust, as I ensure my Saturn is cleaned thoroughly, and all the valves, etc. are [illegible]



So what is it?

Also, just a couple of things I'd like to get sorted. My mate owns a PlayStation and is all smug [illegible] Mortal Kombat [illegible] Resident Evil [illegible] game by [illegible] who [illegible] it?

Dear Yob,

Why [illegible] Sega allow naff games a [illegible] their top consoles?

[illegible] Mortal Kombat 2 - who [illegible] it?

Too many bad games will send us back to the 16 bit days and we all remember The Great Waldo Search and Incredible Hulk. The majority of [illegible] games flop and [illegible] some [illegible] up [illegible] companies need to recoup losses. One example of the best is Earthworm Jim [illegible] poorly and Jurassic Park [illegible] big hit. So come on Sega [illegible] Mighty Morphin [illegible]

YOB: I think last year Sega were secretly happy for anyone bringing out Saturn games, even ones as bad as MK2 or Old Granny's Knackers Adventure. Now the quality threshold is much higher, and there's not very many truly tragic games. This all came about by Sony successfully dissing the machine, and a few 'expert' opinions in the press from people who embrace corporate wisdom pretty glibly. With any luck, the days of poo are numbered.

Dear Yob,

The best [illegible] Mean Machines was [illegible] you doing [illegible] letters with [illegible] asked to [illegible] asking for it. Do you [illegible] Thank you very [illegible]

yours etc.

R. Swiper [illegible]

YOB: A message that warms my heart. They obviously still teach manners on Cackton-on-sewage. As a basis for a conversation, though, it doesn't offer much. Where's the sport in insulting the least significant plebs in the universe?

The Era of Yob as we have known him has now ended, but the era of MEAN MAIL is very much begun. First letter to head the all-new letters concept will get a mystery piece of old cack from Marcus' drawer.

Q&A

Time for more potato waffle to fill out these ridiculous protracted intro bazes. Must get Nick to do something about these for next issue. Actually, Q&A will be part of our pullout section as of next issue, with a new look and a new brief to answer even more of your letters, and less of my ramblings, with more chance of you getting into print. In the meantime, pay special attention to the reply to 'The Import Question' as it clears up the misconceptions surrounding adapters and import discs many of you hold. Then send YOUR letter to: 'SUNNY AND NEW Q&A', at the regular MEAN MACHINES address.

VIC AND BOB

Dear Gus,
Being as I'm going retro mad at the moment (you always were – DAN), please could you answer the following questions for me:
1. Having just bought Super Harrier on import for £38.00, and the Gradius Deluxe Pack for £60.00. Will these titles will be released in the UK, and if so, will they be as bad?
2. Planning on buying After Burner and Out Run (the greatest racer ever EVER), but heard in Sega that all the games will be released on one disk in the UK. Is this true?
3. Will they be converted to run full screen and full speed?
4. In last month's E&VG they stated that Bubble Bobble and Rainbow Islands are being worked to be released on the PC and Playstation. Please tell me they are wrong, as these games will rape the most playable platform ever.
5. What will Devilman Debut

A. Last of all, I've recently been playing new Sega compilation Virtua Cop and have forgotten what it's called, but you are a cop and you shoot people with guns and everything is over the place. Is there any hope of a Saturn conversion for the Saturn?

Mr Pit Fenton, Newcastle upon Tyne

GUS: 1. Super! Space Harrier will be released on a single disc with Outrun and Afterburner too. It's probably £45 Gradius will never be released here.
2. See no. 1.
3. This is the current plan from Sega UK.
4. We reviewed the Bubble Bobble / Rainbow Islands pack last month – very nice and these would be Saturn discs we reckoned.
5. Late November/early December.
6. Gunblade N.Y. No news of a conversion but the pattern of arcade-Saturn is a well established one. Oh, Dan sends his love and asks if you're still a closet 'King of Pop' Jackson fan. Are you?

HUDSON AND WALLS

Dear Gus,
Please will you answer the following questions as it is virtually my world take-over plans next week.
1. Do you have a release date or price for the stunning Dark Saviour?
2. Have you heard any information about Sega's attempt to License [illegible]
3. Any further news on John Madden Football?
4. Any more news on Sonic X-treme or Bug Too?
5. Will you ever release a demo disk on the cover of your excellent mag?
6. Why are GT going to release Doom, even though it has been out and done and [illegible] Redrowed by several better games (Exhumed, Quake and Duke Nukem 3D).
Finally, keep up the good work as this is a stunning magazine whilst

would never read.

Jamie Speed, Derby

GUS: 1. Dragon is out, with English conversion hopefully just before the year's end. Probably £40 for this game.
2. Issues planned to be a problem, but only development on Playstation has currently started. But now Logged has done better on Saturn than Capcom predicted. Hurry up, you!
3. To be seen, he.
4. Apparently, Saturn goes straight to No 2, but there is still no official Sega word on this.
5. Sonic X-Treme as previously known is DEAD. Bug too! Has dropped back into development purgatory as the Americans seemingly got their noses in order.
6. Next month, definitely next month!
7. GT is well aware that Doom has a loyal following and guaranteed money maker. The Saturn only has Exhumed and Alien Trilogy at the moment. Thanks.

SONIC AND GRAHAME

[illegible] Dear Gus,
[illegible] recent [illegible] for the Saturn?
2. In issue [illegible] had the preview of Actua Golf, which said there was an Actua Tennis game in the [illegible] Do you have a release date, Worldwide Soccer [illegible]
4. Have I got £50 to spend on a game, which [illegible] should I get Virtua Fighter out [illegible] Actua Soccer [illegible]
5. There [illegible] PlayStation mags each month, why [illegible] Saturn mags each month? Why don't [illegible] machines have [illegible] Thanks.

[illegible] E. Sussex

GUS: 1. Sega themselves have no tennis products, but licensees are in [illegible] Resident Evil? If so, when?
3. Any more news on Sonic X-treme or Bug Too?
4. Will you ever release a demo disk on the cover of your excellent mag?
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[illegible] recently stages of creating Actua Tennis, and both Ocean and Telstar have games planned.
2. Yes it is.
3. November is as possible as can [illegible]
4. It has to be Worldwide (though NBA Action has been sorely underrated).
5. The Sega Saturn mag is out [illegible] sister magazine and we both get on quite well as it is.

LAVERNIA AND SHIRLEY

Dear Gus,
[illegible] been waiting to see if you [illegible] answer without a reply, but I want you to answer some questions, so answer or my dog will eat you.
1. Since Saturn is 32-bit and so is [illegible] why don't people buy it?
2. [illegible] sweeper 32X?
3. I have got Daytona with VR? Sega Rally and [illegible] Progressive [illegible] Virtua. What games should [illegible]

[illegible] friend thinks Exhumed is [illegible] on the PlayStation. Is he [illegible]

[illegible] 32X for?

[illegible] Oaks, Northampton

[illegible] Which is your favourite? If it's [illegible] get Daytona CCE or maybe Sega Rally. If it's VF2 get Hamlet, Panzer Dragoon 2, Alien Trilogy, Virtua Fighter etc.
3. Beyond that, Defcon 5.
4. No, because I don't [illegible]

[illegible] AND [illegible]

[illegible] Dear Gus,
[illegible] few questions [illegible] please could you answer them?
1. What's your best game [illegible] Saturn?
2. Will there be a game [illegible] Sega Rally?
3. Have heard rumours that the Mega Drive is going to die out. Is this true?
4. Is Daytona CCE going to be better than Sega RALLY?

SID AND NANCY

MOMA AND MOBY

THE IMPORT QUESTION

PINKY AND THE BRAIN

SALLY AND JAKE

Things may change as of next month, but Q&A stays the same. We'll be answering even more queries, so write now.

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I am looking for a pen pal who likes game gears and has got one of his or her own, call Lee on 01538 384359

WANTED: Pushover for PC will pay reasonable prices contact William on (01622) 871816 if not buy, temporary swap.

Super Monaco Grand Prix wanted for Mega Drive Tel: (01363) 82530 ask for Fabien

NEW MEAN MACHINES

NEW DANGER

Let the competition crap themselves. Next month is the fiftieth issue of **MEAN MACHINES**, and it's all change here at EMAP Towers. All the old rubbish has been turfed out (that includes Marcus and Claire). You must get next month's landmark epoch-making issue with its cool new look, and as an added enticement, we're giving away a **Saturn disc** with **PLAYABLE demos** of the hottest games of the year*. And who could be more suitable to front the New Face of **MEAN MACHINES** than Shiny Entertainment, who will be revealing their blockbusting new platformer for '97, **Wild 9**. Don't miss it.

*Limited number of disc issues subject to availability. UK Mainland only. Promotion subject to change without notice.

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